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McCarthy

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

VOL. IV.

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THE
FRENCH REVOLUTION

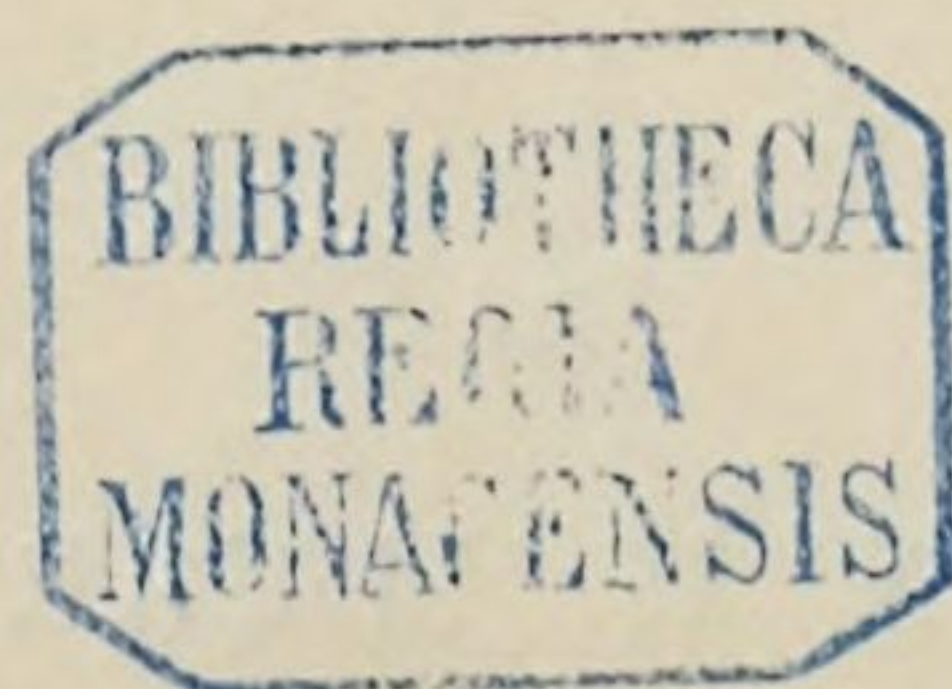
BY
JUSTIN H. MCCARTHY



IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. IV.

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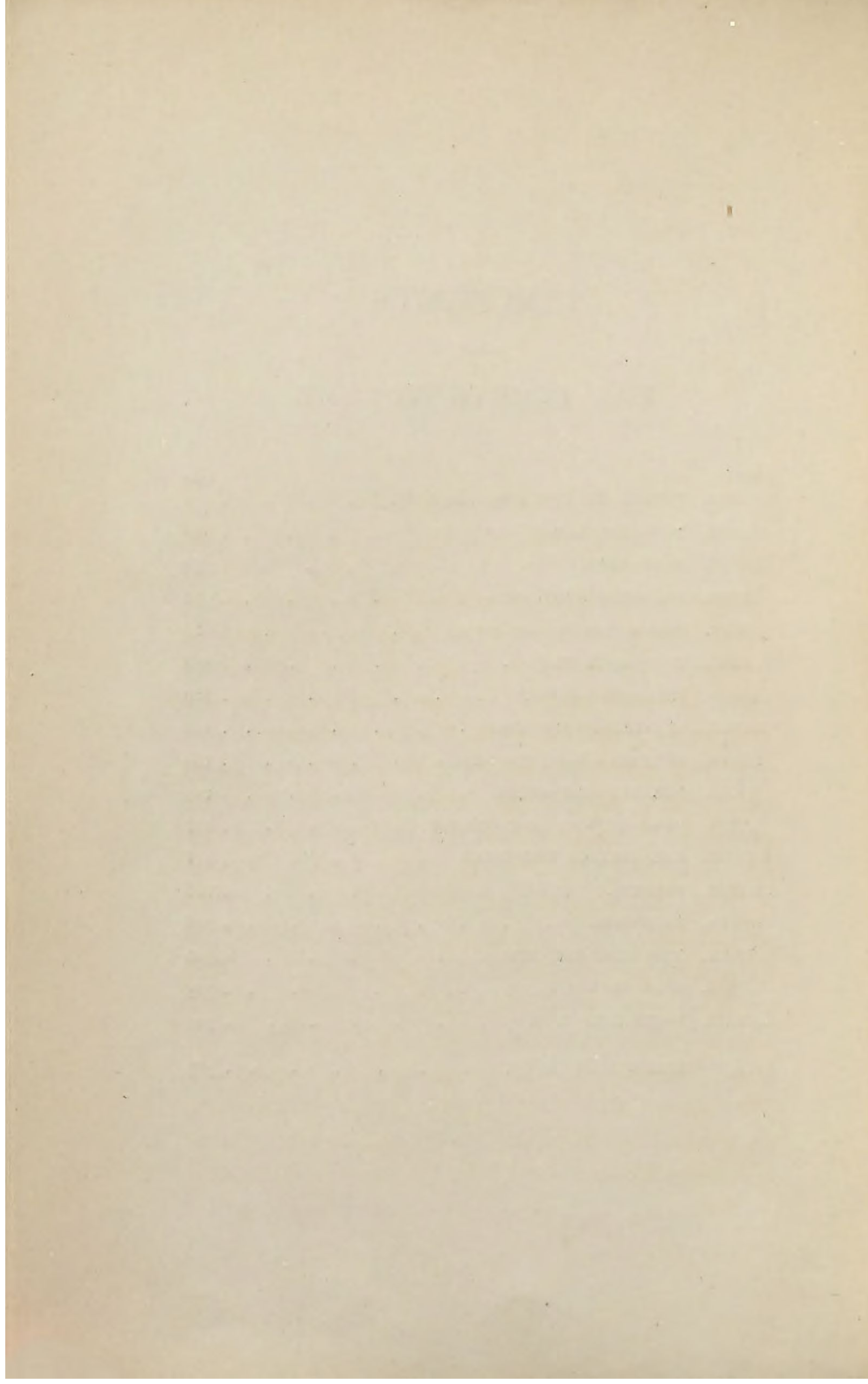


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THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

CHAPTER LXVI

‘CARLE, AN THE KING COME!’

ALTHOUGH it might be, and indeed in this case was proved to be, a momentous thing for a monarch to journey a few miles from one royal palace to another, it would not, on the face of it, seem that this shift of lodgings was in itself a very difficult matter. And yet, curiously enough, at the time when it took place the gravity of the business, its historical importance, its tragedy and its pathos, seemed less conspicuous, at least to the official eye and mind, than the difficulty, the trouble, and the worry of the undertaking. For the King of France to come from his palace at Versailles to his palace at Paris meant an amount of perturbation, of anxiety, of a despair touching the extreme of comedy, of which few except those immediately concerned had any conception. The crowd that raved and shouted around the carriage of the King as it lumbered on its way from Versailles had no idea of the trouble their insurrec-

tionary action was causing to unprepared officials and to a select number of respectable pensioners. If the journey from Versailles involved the fate of the monarchy, it also involved the immediate eviction of these pensioners and exasperated them exceedingly.

Thanks to the researches, to the patience and the perspicuity of M. Lenôtre, in one of the most interesting contributions that has ever been made to what may be called the minor literature of the French Revolution, the student of the period is enabled to gain a curiously vivid picture of the immediate effect upon Paris of the triumph of the Paris mob. The Paris mob had gone out to Versailles to seek its King; the burden of its song was 'the King to Paris;' it had carried its point at the sword's point, and reluctant royalty was escorted to the capital by an army of rejoicing ragamuffins. But, as it was admitted, in those early days of the Revolution, that even a king must eat somewhere and have somewhere to lay his head, Louis XVI. was not prevented from making such arrangements as were possible to ensure shelter, if not comfort, in his good city of Paris. It is true that the Sovereign of France had, nominally, his places of abode in his capital city. There was his palace of the Louvre; there was his palace of the Tuileries. But royalty had lived so long out of Paris that it had ceased to maintain any efficient hold upon the royal palaces. Both the Louvre and the Tuileries had been gradually in-

vaded and surely taken possession of by a creeping population of the most fantastic, the most heterogeneous kind, and this population had settled down by a kind of squatter's right, to what they regarded as uncontested and undisturbed enjoyment of the amount of square feet and enclosing walls in which it had pleased them to pitch their tents. It is hard to form a coherent picture of the condition of the Tuileries at the time when, on October 6, 1789, the King of France, who was so soon to be King of the French, was driven from Versailles.

A courier had been despatched in hot haste from Versailles to Paris to let the Sieur Mique, inspecting architect of the Palace of the Tuileries, know that the King was on his way to the capital, and that his residence must be ready on his arrival to receive him and all the following essential to royalty. It is indeed quite believable that in all bewildered Paris no man was more bewildered than the Sieur Mique, no man so bewildered. For he was suddenly called upon to essay a new labour of Hercules, compared with which the cleansing of the Augean stables was, as who should say, an interlude. The old dwelling of Catherine de' Medici had become a kind of human rabbit warren. It was not in those days a very royal-looking building, and royalty had been so long dissociated with it that the general public had almost ceased to think of it as the habitation of kings. On the side of the Carrousel it was so huddled away behind all manner of other buildings, private houses,

barracks, stables, guard-rooms and the like, that it might very well escape the notice of the passer-by, who could see no more of it above the walls that enclosed the Court of Honour than the high roofs of the three pavilions of the Horloge, of Flora and of Marsan. On the side where the Rue de Rivoli now runs a long and rather high wall, fringing the terrace of the Feuillants for almost the whole of its length, held the place of the railing which exists nowadays. Where the causeway of the Rue de Rivoli now runs there was a large turfed alley, planted here and there with trees, which was used as a trial ground for horses. This was bounded, hard by the Pavillon de Marsan, by a clumsy group of buildings called the Royal Stables, the entry to which was in the Rue Saint-Honoré, almost opposite to the church of Saint-Roch. Where the familiar arcades of the Rue de Rivoli now stand there ran the long, unbroken line of the walls that closed in the gardens of the mansions on the Rue Saint-Honoré. Three large convents occupied the ground which is comprised to-day between the streets of the Twenty-ninth of July and of Saint-Florentin. These were the convents of the Feuillants, of the Capuchins, and of the Assumption. Each of these convents had its entrance in the Rue Saint-Honoré, and the large gardens of the three buildings reached to the terrace of the Feuillants, from which they were only separated by walls. On the side of the Place Louis XV., high terraces and a turning bridge across a moat made the Tuileries gar-

dens inaccessible, and all along the quay the supporting wall of the terrace that bordered the water formed a similar barrier as far as the Pavilion of Flora.

The casual passer-by might very well, therefore, walk all round this large enclosure without seeing anything more of what was inside than the tops of the trees or the slope of the Palace roofs. The only entrance to the garden was by a narrow passage which ran between the buildings of the Feuillants and the buildings of the Capuchins on the ground of the existing Rue Castiglione, or by a narrow alley opening on to the Rue Saint-Honoré, before the church of Saint-Roch, which was called the Street of the Dauphin.

The Palace itself, in the course of years, had come to be tenanted by an amazing, a motley population. For some four-fifths of a century the royal residence had ceased to be a royal residence, and had become, bit by bit, at first in slow degrees and afterwards more swiftly, the happy hunting ground, the kind of glorified Alsatia, for an astonishing crowd of respectable Bohemians and genteel adventurers. Here were huddled together royal pensioners, play-actors, nobles, poor gentlewomen, painters, ladies of quality, officials, invalids, who swarmed in all the rooms on all the floors of the building, and converted it into a kind of human rabbit warren. At first permission to dwell in the deserted Palace had been accorded to a few

Court functionaries whose duties compelled them to live in Paris, but whose means did not permit them to keep up any expensive establishment for themselves. Then there came an overflow from the occupants of the Louvre, from the artists who had been accorded shelter there by royal favour. So the process went on, the vacant spaces in the Palace dwindling yearly as new applicants begged and edged their way within its walls. And once inside those walls the residents made havoc with the interior of the building, putting up partitions, making openings, erecting stairways, hollowing cellars, altering and amending at their pleasure, after a formal appeal, which was never rejected, to authority for permission to make the desired changes in the ancient building. The Palace was, as it were, a sort of ruin for all these queer birds of prey to build their nests in, and so strangely was it changed by their encroachments that, according to an official report of 1783, the royal apartments were made such havoc with that it was impossible to offer the Royal Family even a momentary shelter. The strange colony that had invaded the Tuileries formed a kind of microcosm. It was, at the least, like a little town with its own chapel for parish church, with no less than three theatres for the entertainment of its citizens, with shops actually set up in spare corners of the Palace to provide for the daily needs of the singular settlement. But if these invaders had their comforts, they had also their discomforts. In many

of these eccentrically extemporised lodgings the occupants stifled in summer for want of ventilation, and froze in winter for want of chimneys to make the warmth of a fire possible. The various lodgings were constructed in such a haphazard fashion, the whole place was such a labyrinth, that more than one of the residents thus packed together had to go through the kitchen or the dining-room of a neighbour in order to reach his own abode. From neglect, much of the building seemed to be gradually crumbling into ruin. On one occasion the officiating priest was almost driven from the altar of the chapel by the dangerous condition of the edifice. On another the clock of the central pavilion ceased to indicate the time and was not set going again. Indeed, indication of the passing of time can scarcely have been needed by the odd swarm of vagabonds who daffed aside the time and let it pass in that happy-go-lucky no-man's-land of theirs which had once been the dwelling-place of kings and queens. The lizard, if not the lion, ruled in the halls of Jamshyd.

Now, all of a sudden, the place was to become again a dwelling-place for kings and queens. Poor M. Mique, taken quite unawares, learned that he had just the space of an afternoon before him in which to have all his fantastic brood of tenants evicted, and the place swept and garnished for the reception of its royal and rightful inhabitant. But since the thing had to be done, M. Mique was apparently the man

to do it. Within less time than it takes to narrate this singular episode we are assured that everybody was bundled out of doors in spite of tears, cries, recriminations, menaces and prayers. M. Mique did his best to placate his victims ; hinted at other even more excellent lodgings to be found elsewhere ; made half promises of pecuniary indemnity for disturbance ; was affable but urgent, courteous but peremptory : the tenants had to go.

It may at the first blush seem a little surprising that so wholesale a clearance had to be effected in order to find accommodation for the King and his family. But the surprise vanishes with a knowledge of the following which was considered indispensable for the Royal Family, even under conditions of so much haste and of so much danger. The list of that following has been preserved in the National Archives ; has been investigated by the antiquarian. Made up in haste on October 6, 1789, it evidently contains only the names of those officials whose attendance was considered indispensable. Yet this list constitutes a veritable army. The denominations of many of these attendants are whimsical enough. We find 'garçons des dames de Mesdames ;' we find 'Bouche de la Reine, servant au réchauffoir de Madame ;' we find 'l'échansonnerie du Roi, la rôtisserie du Roi, le gobelet du Roi, la glacière du Roi, la crémèrie du Roi, le feutier du Roi, la boulangerie du Roi.' There was a special German baker for the Queen, a proof of Austrianism

which would not have added to her popularity if it had been generally known. There were an amazing number of medical men in the courtly train : first and second surgeon, first and second physician, first and second apothecary. The Queen had her own set of medical attendants, so had the royal children, so had Madame Elizabeth, so had Mesdames. There were attendant gentlemen of all kinds to swell the ranks of this little army whose presence in Paris caused no small astonishment to the Parisians, long unused to the presence, the ceremonies and the paraphernalia of a Court. It was, perhaps, characteristic of these belated sovereigns that even in such a time, at such an hour, they believed so much pomp to be appropriate to their progress, and thought that the complicated and antiquated system which was helping to kill royalty was essential to its existence. A passive evil at Versailles was an active evil at Paris. The Parisians, flushed with the sense of their new importance as revolutionists, resented and ridiculed these phantom attributes of a moribund feudality : and it was in the highest degree dangerous, just then, to tempt the ridicule or to invite the resentment of the Parisian mob. It had used the arms and armour of chivalry in its attack upon the Bastille, but it could make no use of the courtly attributes and appendages now made manifest to its astonished and angry eyes, and every instrument, every relic of the old order which it could not turn in some way to its own use it already

showed an active inclination to destroy. The crowd of doctors, cooks, and lackeys that filled the rooms and flooded the halls of the Tuileries, and overflowed into lodgings and habitations of all kinds in the immediate neighbourhood of the Palace, were, to the minds of the insurgent Parisians, so many proofs of the folly and the vanity of the throne. It may have been unwise for the King to come to Paris at all. The unwisdom of the act was accentuated and intensified by the conditions under which the transit was accomplished, by the display before so hostile an audience of an untimely pomp and an unmeaning dignity. It was the misfortune of the royal pair then, and on another more signal and more fatal occasion, to be unable to dispossess themselves of the trappings and deny themselves the accompaniments of the royal life, not even at the peril of that life. Perhaps they could not realise, then, the possibility of life without such an environment of service, as they could not realise, later, that life and freedom could be sought for without the comforts of a castle.

Nothing in all that gloomy day was more gloomy than such a home-coming. Little had been done for the reception of the Royal Family beyond the brooming out of the squatters. The place had been swept, but not garnished. Everything was sombre, dilapidated, sparsely furnished, scarcely clean, quite uncomfortable. The Royal Family were obliged for the moment to make the best shift they

could with a roof over their heads and four walls around them. They encamped as strangers encamp at a caravanserai in the East, with scarcely more accommodation than a caravanserai affords. Some of the people of the suite had to seek shelter elsewhere, as there was not room for them in the Palace. The King and Queen accepted the situation calmly. When the little Dauphin, looking about him at the unlovely surroundings of the long-deserted rooms, complained to his mother of their ugliness, she reminded him with pride that they had been found good enough for Louis XIV., and that the newcomers must not be more difficult to please than he was. The Dauphin had to sleep that night without a guard of any kind in a room open on all sides, and with doors that could scarcely be made to shut. Madame de Tourzel barricaded them with such scanty furniture as she found at her disposal, and passed the night by the child's bedside, 'plunged in sorrow and sad reflections.'

To the King and Queen—to the King even more than to the Queen—the new conditions of their life contrasted cruelly with the conditions of the life they had left behind. They had exchanged a palace of unrivalled beauty for a cold, neglected, long-deserted dwelling. The smiling gardens and spacious pleasaunces of the two Trianons where the Queen had laughed away her youth, the glorious deep woods where the King had found his one delight in the chase, had given place to a habitation

surrounded by streets and houses, to a garden limited, overlooked, and public. The King was no longer the sole lord of almost indefinite domains. He was only the most conspicuous, and therefore the most observed, of a number of closely united neighbours. If the royal pair were not in the hands of their enemies, they were not in the midst of their friends.

One of the royal pair was not of a nature to grapple friends to his soul with hoops of steel. An episode of that hour shows perhaps with most significance how little Louis was graced with the kingly art, or even gifted with the kingly artifice. Miomandre de Sainte-Marie was in Paris, recovered from his wounds, and much in the company of a fellow-soldier of the Body-Guard named Bernard, who had also been wounded by a gun-shot on October 6 in another part of the Palace. They were recognised in the Palais Royal, they were insulted by the crowd. News of this came to the Queen's ears, and she judged it best for their safety that they should quit Paris. She sent through Madame Campan a message to Miomandre de Sainte-Marie, summoning him and his comrade Bernard—not Tardivet du Repaire, as Carlyle says—to the Tuileries. From Madame Campan's hands the two soldiers received some small sum of money, some hundred or couple of hundred louis each, to enable them to pay their debts and quit Paris. The gift was accompanied by a very gracious message.

The Queen bade Madame Campan tell them that no money could pay such services as theirs ; that she hoped on some happier day to requite them as they deserved, but that in the meantime they were to think that a sister offered her aid to a brother in distress. No more gracious message ever came from royal lips to reward faithful service. But the Queen did more. While the two soldiers were with Madame Campan the Queen entered, accompanied by the King and Madame Elizabeth. The Queen said that the King wished to see such brave soldiers before their departure. Madame Elizabeth spoke sweetly of the gratitude of the King. Only the King kept silence, standing up with his back to the fireplace. Miomandre spoke a few simple, soldierly words of gratitude on behalf of his comrades and himself. Still the King said nothing, though it is said that his emotion was visible, and that his eyes were full of tears. The situation was embarrassing ; the Queen rose ; the King, still silent, left the room followed by Madame Elizabeth, and the two soldiers passed from the royal presence for ever. Marie Antoinette said to Madame Campan, despairingly : ' I am sorry that I brought the King here, and I am sure that Elizabeth thinks as I think. If the King had said to those brave men but a quarter of the admiration he has for them they would have been overjoyed, but he cannot conquer his timidity.' This little story is the largest commentary upon the fortunes of the

King and Queen. It would seem that it was as impossible for Louis to rise to the height of any situation, to appreciate anything of the kingly business, as it was impossible for Marie Antoinette to fail in queenly bearing, in understanding of what was fair and fit from her towards those who served her. Personal devotion was the last quality that Louis could inspire, as it was the first quality inspired by Marie Antoinette in the hearts of those upon whom it depended to save the monarchy, if the monarchy was to be saved at all.

One would like much to know what became of Miomandre de Sainte-Marie. But history, so far as I can ascertain, after writing his name upon one resplendent page, passes him over thereafter in silence. Madame de Tourzel, in her memoirs, simply says that Miomandre de Sainte-Marie died in exile, and that she never saw him 'after that horrible day.' I have tried without success to find out in what land the gallant soldier lay, how long his exile lasted, what kind of life he led after that supreme night of terror and devotion. But I have found nothing. The rest is silence, and imagination wastes itself in fruitless speculation upon the future of a life that was for once so illustrious. Little more is to be learned of the fate of his gallant comrade Tardivet du Repaire. Madame de Tourzel says of him that he came to pay his respects to the King and Queen as often as he could without danger, and that the little Dauphin was especially cordial in his expres-

sions of gratitude to the true soldier 'for having saved Mamma.' But to his future the history of the time seems to be quite indifferent. There was so much to occupy men's minds that the fortunes of two soldiers who saved a queen's life seemed a thing of little account. But they have had their reward and Carlyle his wish. Their names, as the names of brave men should, live long, will be forever remembered when men praise heroism, praise loyalty, the qualities that make men soldiers and soldiers heroes. Lacretelle rises to rhapsody as he bids them farewell. He assures them that history in citing their names is amazed not to find them more familiar to the memory and the hearts of the French people. Bayard, he declared, on the famous bridge, saving single-handed an army from a dangerous surprise, did nothing more heroic than their heroic deed. The eulogy is none too great ; it would go hard to frame a eulogy above their deserts. It is true that they did their duty, but they did it under terrible conditions. At a moment when princes of the royal blood, when the bearers of ancient names, when great captains were flying with all imaginable speed across the frontier, and leaving their King and Queen to their fate, the names of these two men stand out to redeem the honour, and the courage, and the loyalty of the gentlemen of France.

CHAPTER LXVII

THE ASSEMBLY IN PARIS

THE story of the French Revolution seems to the observer to fall into certain divisions as definite as the acts of a play or the chapters of a tale. One such portion came to its conspicuous end when the mob carried the King to Paris. For with that act all pretence at the independence of the Sovereign, of the independence of the Government, came to an end, and the dominion of Paris began. Now that it had pleased Paris to decide that the King must live within its walls, it was perhaps inevitable that the National Assembly should also make Paris its home. The still maintained assumption that easy and frequent communication between the King and the Assembly was important, and even essential, was one argument in favour of the migration from Versailles. Another argument was the loyal devotion which must needs prompt the Assembly to be at the side of the monarch it professed to cherish. Though it was not to be admitted for one moment that the King could be in any possible danger in his own capital and his own palace, there was indeed a kind of tacit recognition that it would be decent and decorous

56 for the representatives of the people to place themselves in close neighbourhood to the royal person. The declaration of the Duke de Liancourt to that effect had proved the policy of his peers and colleagues. But it was not possible to carry that policy into immediate effect. A habitation of a kind was ready for the monarch. There was no habitation actually ready for the reception of the National Assembly. It had perforce to remain at Versailles until some kind of shelter was found for it in the capital. While this shelter was still to seek it occupied itself with the passing of certain regulations which served in its eyes to 'confirm the Revolution.' The phrase was a favourite one in those early days, when statesmen were still sanguine and not yet sanguinary, when it was amiably assumed that the Revolution was an accomplished fact, a thing of the past whose existence only needed confirmation by the proclamation of certain formulas and the manufacture of by-laws. The Assembly occupied its last days at Versailles in decreeing the responsibility of all ministers of State and of all agents of the administration, in bettering the system of taxation, in ordering the uniformity of the seal for all parts of the empire, and in effecting a change in the title of the King. Up to this time the kings who preceded Louis had borne the title of King of France and of Navarre. This title the Assembly now abolished, and substituted for it the title of King of the French. To a King whose life had been in the deadliest danger a

few days earlier, and who was at that very time practically, if not nominally, a prisoner in his own palace, and in the capital of his kingdom, the new title might well seem to be scarcely less ironical than the old. But it was a significant change, for it did away with the doctrine of the divine right of the sovereign and converted an irresponsible monarch into a citizen whom failure in the duties of his fellow-citizenship would still further convert into a felon.

The interval of separation did not last very long. After a while, on October 19, 1789, the National Assembly found a temporary lodgment in Paris at the Palace of the Archbishopric. This, which was never intended to be permanent, proved even less endurable than was expected. For while other quarters were being arranged for the Assembly by Paris the architect, disaster overcame the sessions in the Archbishop's Palace. A gallery gave way; many people were injured slightly; one deputy was seriously hurt. It seemed decidedly time that the popular body should find some more solid place for its despatch of business. Two and twenty days after its arrival in Paris, on November 9, it found a more abiding dwelling-place. This was the Salle du Ménage, or riding-school, in the gardens of the Tuileries. It stood on the north side of the Tuileries Gardens, in a kind of hole-and-corner situation; it was about as unsuitable a place for a National Assembly as could well have been chosen. A body

of men who had met at a pinch in a tennis-court were not necessarily lodged with elbow-room and comfort in a dusty and deserted riding-school, even if that riding-school were one of four that had been set up, with no conspicuous success, by Louis XIV. for the advantage and the education of the sons of noble houses. The riding-school has gone long ago with the snows of yester-year and the bones of Charlemagne. The traveller who stands where the Rue de Rivoli meets the Rue Castiglione may try to reconstruct it in his mind's eye. Its dreary hall, of a length and narrowness becoming to a riding-school, indeed, but ill becoming to a parliament, had not echoed to the sound of feet, to the sound of voices, for some years before its silence was stirred by the feet and by the voices from Versailles. It was so ill-adjusted for its new purpose that it could only be made to pass as the mere meeting-house of the Assembly. All the dependent offices of a parliamentary body, its library, its committee-rooms, its various bureaux, had to be established elsewhere, in the convent of the Feuillants, which was hard by.

It is one of the grim humours of the Revolution, in its association with Paris, that so many of the names which are, as it were, the catchwords of its history are intimately associated with ecclesiastical institutions. The name of the Jacobins, the name of the Cordeliers, are not more closely connected with the progress of the Revolution in Paris than the name of the Feuillants. In front of the convent

which the exigencies of the hour had turned into a supplement to the Tuileries riding-school there stretched a terrace, wide and long and stately. This terrace played something of the part in the political history of its hour that the terrace of the English House of Commons does in the history of our own day. It extended along a considerable portion of the Rue Saint-Honoré, and after the advent of the National Assembly to Paris it became the familiar recreation ground and meeting-place of the deputies and of the friends of the deputies, and of all persons who could obtain or had the right to walk upon it, and to discuss there the topics of the time. If solitude reigned in gloom over the gardens of the Tuileries, now denied to a public that almost hated them for the sake of the Prince de Lambesc, vivacity reigned on the terrace of the Feuillants, where, so long as the Assembly sat, men walked and talked in defiance of the wintry air at first, and afterwards through all the alternations of the seasons, until long after the first National Assembly had ceased to be.

In the gaunt, gloomy riding-school, its grimness unrelieved by any attempt at ornamentation, accommodation had to be found not merely for the deputies but for those who made themselves the watchers of the deputies. Spacious galleries had been erected along the sides of the hall, and to these galleries the Constituent Assembly declared that the city and the world had the right of entrance. The city at

least availed itself liberally of the permission. The National Assembly soon became but one, if the first, among the theatres of Paris. It had its galleries to play to, and the performers soon saw the importance and learned the trick of playing to the gallery. It was the most popular place in Paris for those to whom leisure was allied with an itch for an ever-changing dramatic entertainment. In the grey of the dawn the doors of the galleries in the riding-school were daily besieged by the zealous or the curious eager to secure or to reserve their places for the day's performance. As the demand for the entertainment increased, the abuse of the Assembly's hospitality grew the more conspicuous. People who were anxious to be present at the play, but who did not care to importune the doors at daybreak, sent, when their means permitted it, sturdy lieutenants who endured the burden and heat of the day, cooled their heels on the threshold, fought for the good seats in the scramble for places, and held them doggedly until such time as their patrons came to relieve them from their duties and reward them for their pains. Even when, after a while, to check in some degree the growing disorder, admission to the galleries was to be obtained by ticket only, the disorder and unseemliness of the galleries continued. Their occupants applauded or hissed as they pleased. The hawkers of journals, the hawkers of fruit, cried their wares unquestioned. On days of great importance the slender safeguard of entrance by ticket

was overborne and the crowd forced its way in, successful in its defiance of all regulation.

After a little while the advantage of a majority among the spectators was as plain to the politicians of the streets, and to those who inspired them, as a majority on the floor of the house itself. It was in fact even more important, for a majority in the galleries might by its noise, its vehemence, its imprecations, and its threats, command a majority in the Assembly. No pains therefore were spared by the enterprising party to secure that majority among the spectators who filled and overfilled the galleries. There were always plenty of men to be obtained, needy, idle fellows, who would for a consideration be as willing to sit in the galleries of the Assembly as anywhere else, would even be more willing to earn their money that way than in any other way, because it brought them, not only food and drink, but the privilege of disturbance and the sense of influence. Paris swarmed with disbanded soldiers, with deserters, men who were the very lees of adventure, willing enough to huddle together all day on the benches in the galleries of the National Assembly and to applaud this orator and hoot that orator in obedience to the signal of their leader. This was the introduction of the theatrical clique with a vengeance, but it had its effect in the first place in animating the spirit of the unpaid portion of the spectators, and in the second place of exercising its very appre-

ciable influence upon the gentlemen whose privilege it was to make laws, or to try to make laws, for a new France. The clamour of the mass in the galleries had inevitably its grave effect upon the mass in the hall below those galleries. The fruit-eating, newspaper-reading, claque-prompted, if not claque-led spectators in the gallery were allowed not merely the license of punctuating with delirious applause the utterances of any speaker whom they were pleased to admire, but the yet greater license of interrupting the speeches of those whom they did not admire with shrieks, hoots, groans, and all manner of vociferations and vituperations.

Under such conditions it was plain that the blessing of freedom of speech which it was one of the immediate aims of the Revolution to attain, hardly found the fairest field for its exercise within the walls of the National Assembly. The atmosphere of any parliamentary chamber must needs be feverish, electric, overcharged with passion, emotion, excitement, dangerously sensitive, painfully alive. But when the inevitable conditions of parliamentary life are intensified as they were in the early days of the Revolution, when the difficulties are increased in so preposterous a degree, it is of course fated that the influence of external opinion must be experienced to a degree incompatible with the decency, the decorum, and the very existence of any coherent representative assembly. The National Assembly soon became as a body little better than the butt and

toy of those who had no voice in its deliberations and no share in the choice of its delegates.

But even in the beginning of its Parisian life, before it had come to its worst, the National Assembly did not seem, to some of its members, a desirable or even endurable place of debate. To men whose mettle was not quarrelsome, who could not brawl or storm, or contentedly submit to be brawled and stormed at, the prospect of public life, of parliamentary life, seemed either too perilous or too ignoble to be accepted. Some, therefore, declined to accept it. The arrival of the King in Paris was promptly followed by two emigrations, the one of a large body of men, the other of a single man, the one voluntarily, the other involuntarily, but both deeply significant of the temper of the time. The nobility, headed by the Count d'Artois, had set the singular example of acting on the assumption that the best way to deal with a difficulty is to run away from it. But foolish, even ignominious, as the flight of d'Artois and his first companions was, it had at least the excuse of a not unreasonable instinct of self-preservation. D'Artois and his friends knew themselves to be publicly proscribed; they knew, or believed they knew, that the people would lose no time in putting the proscriptions into effect, and they believed, or professed to believe, that the only way to keep their heads on their shoulders was to carry them with all convenient speed across the frontier. But some of the men, who now, to the world's

amazement, followed the example of the fugitive princes, had not such an excuse, and would not, for the most part, have regarded it as a valid excuse if it had existed. The National Assembly suddenly found its numbers remarkably reduced. A large proportion of the royalist party in the Assembly left it with an anxious alacrity. More than three hundred deputies asked for and obtained leave of absence. Of these many, no doubt, were actuated by a desire for their own safety, which, after the events of October 5 and 6, they might well be pardoned for believing to be placed in no slight jeopardy. Many again, no doubt, professed, as the emigrating nobles had professed, to serve their King and their country best by the protest of their absence. But there were others among these new emigrants from whom a different action might have been expected, men who inflicted a severe injury to the cause they served by their abrupt if not unreasoned nor, indeed, unreasonable departure. The departure of men like Mounier, like Lally-Tollendal, like the Bishop of Langres, and others, whose moderation was perhaps more than ever needed in a time of such immoderate emotions, caused surprise at the time and has caused regret ever since. Lally-Tollendal explained himself at some length, and with all his habitual eloquence, in a letter to a friend which was made public. It is impossible, on reading it, not to feel that there is much to be said for Lally-Tollendal's point of view. He declared, gallantly

and truthfully, that it was not the fear of death which drove him to withdraw from the National Assembly. He recognised that a man might put his life in peril once, and even many times, but he denied that any man was bound to suffer uselessly a thousand martyrdoms in each minute and to perish of rage and despair in the midst of crimes which he could do nothing to arrest or avert. He declared that it was beyond his strength to endure any longer the bloodshed, the assassinations, the insulted Sovereign, the menaced Queen, the heads exalted on the points of pikes, the composure of Bailly, the audacity of Mirabeau, and the laughter of Barnave. The days of October had convinced him that the only thing left for a decent citizen to do was to quit the Cavern of Cannibals, for so Lally-Tollendal in his heat and passion chose to designate the National Assembly.

But if the self-imposed exile of Lally-Tollendal, of Mounier, and of those who thought like Lally-Tollendal and like Mounier, had at least something semi-Roman in its simplicity of motive and ingenuousness of exculpation, there was nothing either simple or ingenuous in the motives which led the Duke of Orleans to leave France. The Moderates of the Assembly left of their own accord in the free-will of their folly or of their despair. The Duke of Orleans left against his will, because he was compelled to leave, because he had no choice but to accept the degrading exile which was thrust

upon him under the poor pretence of a diplomatic mission. Orleans had made enemies in two powerful quarters. He was naturally hated by the adherents of the King, who was still, in name at least, the ruler of the kingdom. He was scarcely less naturally hated by a man who for the moment was far more influential than the King, by Lafayette. It is probable that Lafayette knew all, or almost all, that there was to know about the days of October. It seems certain that he knew, or that he acted as if he knew, and as if Orleans believed that he knew, the extent in which Orleans was incriminated in those events. The exact facts no man knows, no man will ever know, but what appears to be likely is that Lafayette made the menace of revelation the means of expulsion. Lafayette could have no kind of sympathy with so ignoble, so incapable a schemer as Orleans. Lafayette's passion for liberty did not extend to allowing a prince of the blood to attempt the assassination of his sovereign and kinsman. It is clear that Lafayette thought that the air of France would smell the sweeter if France were purged of the presence of Orleans. And accordingly he seems to have insisted that Orleans must go. It is scarcely to be assumed that the King and those who stood by the King were very unwilling to say farewell, if only for a season, to Philip of Orleans. But it is characteristic of the time that even a step which the Court was willing to take, it took in obedience to the impulse of Lafayette.

At least it is certain that Orleans was called on to leave France, and that he did leave France, with the flimsiest pretence of diplomatic business that ever yet pretended to shield disgrace and exile with a blazon of honour and of honourable occupation. Louis gave to his cousin a letter to the King of England and the figment of a mission. He was entrusted with the formal regulations usually given to an important intermediary. It was a part of the grotesque game to assume that the mission of the Duke of Orleans was to explain to the Sovereign of Great Britain something of the meaning and the purport of the agitations existing in Belgium. There was at least a hint suggested that if Belgium came to choose a king, France, so far as France was represented by Louis XVI., would not object to see Philip of Orleans seated upon the Belgian throne. No more ludicrous embassy ever existed outside the compass of a comic opera. Yet it was characteristic of the man that he took this buffoon mission very seriously and clowning his part with an insufferable seriousness.

Philip of Orleans arrived in London full of importance. If he was disappointed by his failure to gain the lieutenant-generalship of France, at least he had every reason to think that he might wear a Flemish crown. The chance of a throne was to Orleans as the certainty ; already he fancied himself consecrated ; already he and the feather-headed gentlemen who formed his Court began to plan a

new diplomacy and play at a new Fronde. Orleans believed that this mission to England would give him the opportunity of winning George III. to his political views and his firebrand scheme of European alliances. But he did not know that while he wore the ostensible character of an envoy all importance had been taken from his mission by the private communications which the French Government addressed to the English Government, communications which made it plain to the English King and the English Ministry that the mission of Orleans was a mere feint adopted for the purpose of getting him out of France. Orleans soon learned that his mission wore only a mask of meaning. George received him with a politeness that veiled indifference; the example of the King was followed by his ministers. Orleans was civilly disregarded by those in authority, uncivilly disregarded by those whom official responsibility did not force to offer him the show of welcome. He found a refuge from this disdain in the only solace life seemed capable of affording him, the solace of debauchery. But if debauchery afforded some alleviation for the destruction of his dreams of empire, it did not deaden his detestation of those who had duped him into exile. Little spirits, says a philosopher, think themselves strong when they know how to hate. As far as the capacity to cherish ignoble hatred went, Orleans was a giant.

The National Assembly had counted for some-

thing in the exile of Orleans. When the Prince's faction heard of the mission they made an attempt to have his departure stopped by the people of Boulogne, but the National Assembly under the influence of Lafayette set aside all the obstacles that were raised to stay the Duke's departure. The majority in the Assembly were probably as indifferent to the loss of Orleans from their deliberations as they were to the emigration of the Moderates. They had their business and desires in life, such as they were, the business of making the Constitution, the desire of confirming the Revolution, and they laboured at the one with patience, and cherished the other with impatience. In the little that was left to them of the great year, in the few first weeks of their habitation in Paris, the majority in the Assembly undertook and carried out two gigantic enterprises and a third that was little less portentous with a light heart, with a headlong swiftness. These were tasks whose bulk and gravity might have awed if not abashed enthusiasts less headlong, iconoclasts less zealous. But the statesmen, but the politicians who led and made up the majority in the Assembly, were impelled to energy of action by two impulses, the one as it were external and the other internal. The first was an immediate need of money, money to restore the ruined credit of the country, to cover something of the nakedness of the national treasure chest, and to keep the Revolution not merely alert, but even

alive. The second was the conviction with which the mind of the majority was saturated, a conviction directly opposed to the Pangloss-like optimism that whatever is is right, the unflinching conviction that whatever is is wrong. The exchequer was empty ; it must needs be filled, partially if not entirely. The majority in the Assembly believed that they had found the way to fill it. The whole of the realm of France was out of gear. The majority in the Assembly believed that they had found the way to remould it nearer to the heart's desire. There were ancient institutions to be reformed, and the majority in the Assembly believed that they had found the way to reform them altogether. And being the majority, they worked out the problem in their own way without, as it would seem, one tremor of doubt, not merely of their wisdom, but even of their infallibility.

The two chief tasks which the Assembly now undertook are perhaps the most amazing of their experiments and the most monumental of their achievements, for good or evil. Both have been battled over a hundred times ; men are as little agreed now as they were little agreed a century ago as to the prudence, the honour, or the sanity of these two adventures. What seems to one party the inspired heroism of saviours of society seems to the other no better than the savage and stupid spoliation of a pack of bandits. The first adventure was the adventure after money. Necker's schemes and

dreams had come to nothing ; neither unacceptable loans nor patriotic contributions had served to stop the hole. Necker had apparently nothing new to propose ; a stronger and a stranger spirit took his place. The Bishop of Autun, inspired by or imitating Mirabeau, had a plan, and what Talleyrand proposed the majority in the Assembly responded to with rapture. It had at least the merit of simplicity. Talleyrand pointed out that the Church had vast possessions, great wealth, varied treasure. What could be simpler than to take away the wealth from the service of the Church and apply it to the service of the State ? A scheme which seemed no better and no other than highway robbery in the eyes of the minority shone with the splendour of salvation in the eyes of the majority, From applauding the proposition to carrying it into effect was but a step. The minority fought hard indeed for their cause ; there was a war of arguments for and against ; members of the majority showing with unanswerable logic that the Church had no right to its possessions when the interests of the State were concerned ; members of the minority showing with no less unanswerable logic that the Church had a right to its own, and that the interests of the State would be served by protecting that right in common with all other rights. The arguments on both sides are still to be read in contemporary pages of almost interminable debates, in pages of interminable controversy ever since. Each set of arguments seems irresistible in the eyes of its

advocates. But, right or wrong, the majority carried the day ; right or wrong, the minority found itself, if not out-talked and out-argued, at least out-generalled and out-voted. The economic question how far a majority in a haphazard assemblage of delegates has the right, in the name of the higher virtue, to lay its hands upon that which a minority has been for generations permitted to regard as its property has not yet been answered. Majority and minority united in believing, or professing to believe, that the interests of the nation, and in consequence the interests of humanity, were of the first importance. Where they failed to agree was as to the best means of serving those interests. That vast ethical problem, more inscrutable than the Sphinx, was solved for the National Assembly by the simple expedient of a division list. Out of so many lawyers, soldiers, burgesses, priests, nobles, citizens of many kinds, chosen and gathered together for a quite different purpose and business, the larger number decided that the interest of France and the interests of humanity were best served by the wholesale annexation of the goods and gear of the Church. The question of right may still be admitted to be debatable ; as to the question of might there could be no debate whatever. Whatever of force and strength of hand or of prestige there was in France remained, more or less, in the hands of the National Assembly or of those whom the National Assembly believed that it influenced and unconsciously obeyed.

According to Talleyrand, the property of the clergy amounted to several thousand millions of francs. According to his calculations, this vast sum would not merely pay the public debt and fill the impoverished exchequer, but would amply suffice for the proper endowment of the Church, the proper payment of its ministers, and the discharge of all ecclesiastical obligations. Against this proposition the upper clergy and the most part of the nobles fought gallantly and fought in vain. The Abbé Maury battled for his cause and his camp with his usual unconquerable courage, with his usual unabashable wit. He exhausted every argument, he appealed to every passion that might serve his turn, but he argued and appealed in vain. When a large number of men are convinced, wisely or unwisely, justly or unjustly, that it is for the public good and the common weal that they should have the disposal of the wealth of others, it would be hard to convince them to the contrary even though the pleader spoke with the tongue of men and of angels. Maury may have been on the side of the angels, but he spoke but with the speech of men, and the stars in their courses fought against him as they fought against Sisera. Some one asked Talleyrand why he did not reply to Maury. The Bishop of Autun had a characteristic answer, full of sour suavity. The Abbé Maury, said Talleyrand, had an inviolability that was all his own; but he feared that if he replied to Maury the people would hang Maury out of hand. Indeed Maury was

often enough in danger of the gallows, danger from which he was saved less by the possession of an unclerical brace of pistols—for Maury was ever of the Church militant—than from his never-failing wit and his never-failing courage. Maury, in the comment of Duquesnoy, had what is commonly called eloquence, which is, for the most part, no more than a kind of luxury of words and an assemblage of more or less picturesque ideas. It was at least no bad idea of Maury's to demand whence the Assembly got the power it claimed and was prepared to usurp; how from a mass of mere deputies of so many bailiwicks it had been converted all of a sudden into a National Assembly with despotic authority to dispose of the property of others. The question had its pertinence, but Mirabeau was never at a loss for a reply. He answered the Abbé Maury, as he said, in plain terms. The deputies of the people became a National Assembly on the day on which, finding the chamber of the Assembly of the people's representatives bristling with bayonets, they met together and swore to perish rather than abandon the interests of the people. On the day on which an act of madness attempted to interfere with their sacred mission they became a National Assembly for the purpose of destroying the order of things in which violence attacked the rights of the nation. Mirabeau did not allow himself or his hearers time to ask how far violence changed its nature by changing its instruments, or how far a constitutional question was

settled by a few swelling phrases not bold enough to assert the intelligible principle of the strong hand. He flung himself headlong into anecdote. He asked the Assembly to remember the story of the great man who, in order to save his country from a conspiracy, had been compelled to determine to act against the laws with that decision which the unanswerable call of necessity justifies, and who, when asked if he had not violated his oath, defended himself by the dexterous if ambiguous answer that he had saved the republic. As he spoke, Mirabeau turned towardst he deputies of the left and, extending his hand, as if in benediction, declared that they in their turn had saved the republic. If the Abbé Maury was a sophist, Mirabeau could and did beat him at his own game. There were other eloquent speakers on the right for whom Mirabeau was also ready. The Archbishop of Aix fought for his order with an eloquence which in certain passages wrung for him the applause not of his admirers but of his opponents. Mirabeau himself was seen and heard to applaud him loudly, but the moment after he had given his applause he called to the Archbishop, that he could applaud his talent without adopting his opinions.

Mirabeau could not convince all those who supported him that the great annexation should be made without the special consultation and approval of the country as a whole. But Mirabeau did what he usually did when he set his heart upon a matter.

He carried his point and carried his party with him. On November 2 a memorable motion was put to the test of a division. The motion was Mirabeau's. Mirabeau had adopted with the ardour of authorship the proposal of Talleyrand. A plan that Mirabeau inspired soon came to be Mirabeau's plan. Mirabeau's motion declared in the first place that all ecclesiastical property was at the disposal of the nation, but chargeable with a suitable provision for the expenses of religious worship, for the support of the ministers of religion, and relief of the poor, under the superintendence and according to the instructions of the provinces. In the second place, it provided that there should be assigned for the allowance of the curés not less than 1,200 livres, not including therein a dwelling and garden. This motion was carried by a majority of 568 to 346, not a very conspicuous majority for so comprehensive a measure. Without involving study of the intricacies of ecclesiastical defence and anti-clerical attack, it must be admitted that a majority composed variously of sceptics steeped in the spirit of the Encyclopædists, of theists exalted by the dreamings of Rousseau, of emulous Jansenists hot to mould the Church after their own manner, of atheists, of adventurers, of lawyers guided by the old monarchical tradition of the supremacy of the State, was hardly likely to form a very impartial tribunal for the trial of so grave a matter, a matter that seemed so especially to call for impartiality and patience, for freedom from the

heats and rages of faction and the petulances of haste. But men newly used to legislation by passion after the manner of August 4 were not likely to let, and did not let, questions of this kind stand in their way. They wanted the wealth of the Church. They believed it had been ill-gotten and ill-used by the Church. They wanted it for the nation of which they believed themselves to be not merely the representatives but the creators. They found that it was in their power to take it, and they took it. Any hopes the opposing clergy might have founded upon the difficulty of dealing with the property of the Church were soon dissipated. A ready means was devised by their adversaries for taking their lands and distributing them among a great number of purchasers, who would be all interested in maintaining their title by supporting the Revolution which had given it to them. Crown lands and Church lands were put upon the public market to the value of nearly eighteen millions of pounds, and a State paper money was immediately issued to the same amount. This currency took the form of notes called assignats, ranging in value from one thousand livres to two thousand livres. These were to be used in payment of State creditors, and were to be received back by the State from purchases of the Crown and Church lands offered for sale. But they were also made a legal tender as money all through the kingdom and for all purposes. The holder of assignats could at any time

convert them into property if he chose to buy any of the lands offered for sale by paying for them in assignats, while, as they also had an enforced currency, he could dispose of them as if they actually were the money that they represented. Those who received assignats in payment were always free if they chose to purchase land with them, and the assignats which were received for the purchase of land were to be publicly burnt, and so were gradually to be withdrawn from circulation.

Vainly did the clerics and royalists inveigh against a paper currency, point with ominous fingers to the example of John Law and prophesy national bankruptcy. The scheme, as far as it went, was financially sound, whatever its moral qualities may have been. It had nothing in common with the dust and chaff, the heat and perturbation of the Rue Quincampoix. The bold stroke beat national bankruptcy back for the instant and even for the hour. If indeed afterwards the system of the assignats, brutally and stupidly abused, proved, at least for a time, disastrous to the interests of France, there was nothing, from the merely monetary point of view, that was condemnable or other than commendable in the step taken by the majority of the Assembly. Whether the treatment of the Church was just or unjust, the problem of replenishment, given that treatment, was worked out and answered with intelligence and dexterity. For the moment the hole

in the strong box was patched up. The maw of the Cerberus whom men called Deficit was soothed. There was money in hand, there was money in pocket, and in comparison with that amazing fact the existence of an affronted hierarchy seemed a fact of the least possible moment. The enmity of the Church appeared to be a poor matter to politicians who, when they accepted the Church at all, only accepted it as a ruin that cried for restoration, as an abuse that clamoured for reform, and who for the most part regarded it with a mind trained to the fine irony of the Encyclopædists or the speculative anarchy of Rousseau.

In the recently published despatches of the Venetian ambassadors during the French Revolution, the student finds a lively picture of the process of converting the property of the Church into National property as it seemed in the eyes of the envoys of an ancient and Catholic State. To the Venetian ambassadors, surveying the spectacle as they did with minds as yet unconcerned for the safety of their own power, and only agitated by the sight of an upheaval so perplexing to intelligences moulded in a venerable tradition and a profound respect for the past, the action of the National Assembly was but one further step in its system of destruction and of popular sovereignty. On the Day of the Dead, they write picturesquely home, the National Assembly has dealt out death to the wealth of the Church. They emphasise with an Italian

sense of irony the last clause in Mirabeau's motion—that which gave to the curates a stipulated wage, not including house and garden. This last article, they say, has been set down with malicious intent to ensnare the suffrages of the curés, and to ensure a large majority, and the ambassadors are candid enough to admit that in truth the curés at least do not suffer by the change. But it was not left to the Italians to appreciate the dexterous malice of Mirabeau's phraseology. Its meaning was as obvious as it was dexterous. The net was spread, and not in vain, in the sight of the bird. No sooner was the motion proposed than some one in the National Assembly, as reported by Duquesnoy, and probably Duquesnoy himself, saw in it the handiwork of a great rogue, but of a rogue of genius. But Duquesnoy insists that it was the ascendancy of Mirabeau—the ascendancy of a man of genius—that succeeded in formulating, and finally in carrying the famous motion.

It is very remarkable, says the same shrewd critic, that the motion was carried during the presidency of Camus, long a clerical advocate, long a clerical pensioner, a man who had been elevated to the presidency only by the intrigues and the manœuvres of the clerical party. On one important day of the deliberations which decided the fate of the ecclesiastical property Camus did not preside. According to the promulgated report, he did not preside because he was suffering from a sudden loss

of voice, due, indeed, to his habitual and vehement loquacity. But the wits would have it that he had not quite the courage to preside over the humiliation of the body to which he owed so much, and it was said of him, playfully, that he was suffering from an ecclesiastical chill.

The next great enterprise of the advanced party in the Assembly was the enterprise of reconstructing France. The condition of France was undoubtedly anomalous enough. It had gradually taken its social and political shape across the centuries. Through the rise and wane of feudalism, through civil and foreign wars, through invasion and aggression, through loss and gain, the face of France had come to wear a certain aspect. It was divided into a number of provinces, very much as England is divided into counties. These provinces were of many sizes and of many shapes, irregular with the irregularity of the handiwork of time. Many of them were almost like little separate countries, speaking a different speech and following national customs different from the speech and the customs of the bulk of France. Almost all these provinces were governed by different local laws. Under the most objectionable rule of the old arrangement, they were each administered, as to taxation, by quite different systems, which made the fiscal relationships throughout the whole of France very complicated indeed, and very irritating to its victims. Thus, goods travelling from one end of the country

to the other might come under half a dozen different impositions of duty-money on their journey, exactly as if they were being conveyed across the continent of Europe, and across the frontiers of so many separate and independent States. The abuses of the existing organisation were patent enough to any body of men zealous for reform. Their evils cried aloud for remedy, and the reformers in the Assembly were deaf to no cry of the kind. But the reform which the majority in the Assembly now proposed for the abuses and evils was conceived on the simple principle of the spoiled sum and the clean slate. Because the division of France into provinces was accompanied by evils accidental, and not incidental, to that division, the enthusiasts of the Assembly could think of no better way to meet the difficulty than by boldly wiping out all the old divisions of the country, dividing it neatly into equal parts with a ruler and a pencil, and naming the divisions of their brand-new chessboard with a brand-new set of brand-new names. It was all portion and parcel of the belief which we shall find animating almost every action of the revolutionary leaders—the belief that if you call a thing by a new name it becomes a new thing. It seemed to them that the existence of so many provinces, which were almost so many little kingdoms, was a menace to the unity of the Revolution and a hindrance to the spread of revolutionary ideas. A Burgundy, a Picardy, a Vendée, a Provence, hide-bound in traditions, animated by a spirit

of individual existence, might not prove amenable to, or enthusiastic for, the new gospel of life according to the National Assembly. But if at a blow the Assembly destroyed all the old divisions and made new ones, by which men of one province suddenly found themselves incorporated with men of another province, in a new division of land, under a new name, and under new laws, it was hoped and believed that the different provincial centres of independence would be annihilated, and that, with a plan of harmonious unity, the path of the Revolution would be made straight.

The new men would have nothing to do with the old world. Mirabeau might be anxious to develop the spirit of the present from the spirit of the past, and to preserve that element of provincial federalism which appealed to so large a proportion of the population. But the reformers knew nothing of the golden mean. They resolved to sweep away at one stroke the political provinces, the financial generalities, the civil intendancies, the military governments, the ecclesiastical dioceses, the bailiwicks and the judicial seneschalcies into which they found their France divided. If the France of the North—the France of the *langue d'oïl*—followed the common law ; if the France of the South—the France of the *langue d'oc*—followed the Roman Law ; if there were here places with one peculiarity of taxation and there places with another peculiarity of taxation, the enthusiasts were resolved to

obliterate them all. No longer should Corsica owe a half-allegiance to the Republic of Genoa, nor Strasburg and Alsace look for certain questions to the authority of the Germanic Empire. No longer should Brittany cling to the old Breton constitution, which had been granted to it at the time of the marriage of Anne of Brittany, and which, though not of assured popularity in the whole of the province, was still recognised and obeyed. No longer should Burgundy, seized for the realm of France so long ago by Louis XI., preserve its contract, nor French Flanders retain customs and government akin to those of the Imperial cities, nor Roussillon seem in speech and manners to be a portion of the soil of Spain. All these differences of race, creed, tongue, custom, tradition the zealots were hot to destroy. They were for annihilating all things made, not indeed to a green thought in a green shade, but to a grey thought in a grey shade. It did not seem to occur to any of them that it was a forlorn hope to dream of obliterating the Norman, the Gascon, the Breton, and the Provençal. The statesmen of the hour, big with the bigness of their schemes, would have smiled if they had been warned that when another century had come and gone Norman and Gascon, Breton and Provençal would still exist as isolated, as individual as before, each with his own temperament, his own variety of language, and his own characteristic ways. They did not appreciate that it was one thing to abolish an

evil system of taxation, but that it was quite another thing to make so many millions of contrasting men homogeneous and to alter the processes of the world with the stroke of a pen.

However, they did their best in the two enterprises. They wanted at first to divide France into eighty equal departments, but they found they could not manage this, so they divided her up into eighty-two, as nearly symmetrical in size, as nearly equal in population, as they could manage, with the island of Corsica all by itself for an eighty-third department. These new departments were newly named after their position by great rivers or by great mountains, or by the borders of the sea. Each department was subdivided into districts, which were further subdivided into cantons. The inhabitants of these new departments were themselves divided into three classes: passive citizens, active citizens, and electors. To be an active citizen it was necessary to be twenty-five years of age, to have lived in a particular canton for a year, to pay taxation equivalent to three days of work, and, moreover, not to be a hired servant. In order to be an elector, an inhabitant had to pay taxation equivalent to the worth of ten days' work. As for the ambitious citizen who might aspire to the honour of election to the National Assembly, he had to pay a contribution to taxation of not less than fifty livres. Every canton was the seat of a primary assembly when the number of active citizens was not more

than nine hundred. When the number was more than nine hundred, two primary assemblies were formed. The duty of these primary assemblies, thus composed of active citizens, was to choose electors in the proportion of one elector to every hundred inhabitants from among the active citizens of the canton. The duty of these electors, in their turn, was in the first place to elect the members of the administration of the department from the eligible citizens of all the districts, and in the second place to elect the deputies to the National Assembly from among the eligible citizens of the department. Each department had its Administrative Council, composed of thirty-six members, and its Executive Directory, composed of five members. It was the business of the Council to decide, and of the Directory to act. The various districts, organised on the same principle as the department, had each its own little Council and its own little Directory, less numerous than and deriving its authority from the higher Council and the higher Directory. The Directories were permanent, while the Councils had to assemble every year for a month to settle questions of receipt and expense. As for the cantons, formed of five or six parishes, they were merely electoral divisions and had no administrative character. The King could only suspend the councils of a department or a district with the authorisation of the National Assembly, and even then only on certain conditions.

It would have been difficult to devise any system

of reform less likely to satisfy the people whom it professed to serve, or less in accordance with the spirit in which those who had helped to make, and who were still making, the Revolution, professed to act. Ingenious in its pettiness of subdivision, its minute machinery of wheel within wheel, it was wanting in everything that lends dignity to a measure of reform and security to a measure of revolution. The people, in whose name the Revolution had been attempted, and by whose aid it had been accomplished so far, were left by this amazing arrangement out in the cold. As far as having any share in the government of the country was concerned, they were as well off under the old order, and would have been as well off under an oriental despotism. The Revolution, manipulated by burgesses, was now, as it seemed, to be so curbed, so restricted, as to leave all the power it had set free in the hands of the burgesses. Even those who were constituted active citizens were by no means too well pleased with their position, and those who were forced into the position of passive citizens were, if powerless as legislators, extremely active as enemies of a new system which was for them no better than the old. The National Assembly, which had been called into existence by the suffrages of some five millions of people, displayed a curious inconsistency when in its great measure of reform it deliberately denied the franchise on which it relied to something like two millions of the people of

France. Limited reforms, limited revolutions are difficult things to accomplish. The new scheme seemed cankered from the beginning, and doomed to perish.

But if the new scheme bore in its very nature the germ of its destruction, it was not without accomplishing much that was good. The newly created administrative divisions were made to serve also as judicial divisions. The administration of justice was completely reconstructed. Every department had a criminal court ; every district a civil court. The judges of these courts were elected by the electors of the department and the district. The primary assemblies in each of the cantons into which the districts were divided elected justices of the peace for petty trials. By the new arrangement any member of the legal profession had the chance to be chosen as a judge, and judges were only elected to hold office for the term of six years. If the new justice was not faultless, at least it had fewer faults than were attendant upon the new division of the kingdom. All manner of fantastical, old-fashioned, whimsical, and even savage forms of law and of what was called justice vanished from the page of history. The new procedure gave a decent chance, and something more than a decent chance, to the accused. By a desperate innovation it was decided that heresy and magic were no longer to be regarded as crimes, that torture as a form of law was to be done away with for good and

all, and that the punishment of death was to be decreed for something more serious than the trivial reasons which had prevailed before the change. A form of trial by jury was adopted. Distinction of class was no longer permitted to count in the decisions of the law. Arbitrary arrest, arbitrary imprisonment were decently provided against. The new penal code was better on the whole than that of the other countries of Europe.

The base of the new social system was the commune, which was administrated by a municipal council presided over by a mayor. This municipality was made up of members whose number was proportional to the population. The municipal officers were chosen directly by the active citizens, and they alone had the power to call upon the aid of armed force. An elected official, called the procureur syndic, had the duty of defending the interests of the commune in the district.

These comprehensive changes did not pass unchallenged, or challenged only by the minority in the National Assembly. From all parts of the country a flood of protests poured in upon the National Assembly. There were petitions, piteous or indignant, from this little commune or that large district which found itself torn away from the province to which it was attached by time and tradition in order to become portion and parcel of a newly made division with which it had neither language, customs, nor history in common. But the

Assembly, or at least the majority in the Assembly, paid no heed to protest or appeal, and went steadily on its way of renovation. The minority, indeed, supported every protest, lent its countenance to every attack, and did everything that lay in its power to discredit the National Assembly. Convinced that the new condition of things could not last long, they flung themselves against their enemy with a desperation that was not necessarily heroic because it was entirely hopeless. They had to give way before the breakers of images.

In the great game of skittles which the new men were playing with the institutions of the old order, the upsetting of one little pin seemed almost insignificant in the presence of such wholesale havoc. Yet the abolition of the old Parliaments of France, taking place as it did at about the same time as the confiscation of the wealth of the Church and the repartition of France, was significant, even momentous enough, and would have seemed more significant, more momentous in hours less pregnant of events. The provincial parliaments, that had in their day so often battled against the authority of the kings and the encroachments of ministers, had now in the latest phase of their existence become centres of reaction—had taken upon themselves to quarrel with, to protest against, even to invalidate, or rather to declare invalid, the decrees of the deputies. They went further. They gave a covert if not an overt encouragement to certain little outbursts of sedition.

They were decidedly and conspicuously counter-revolutionary. They were in the way of the new men, and the new men were stronger than they and quietly snuffed them out of their flickering existence. On a motion of Alexandre de Lameth, it was decreed that the parliaments should remain in vacation until the complete re-organisation of justice throughout the kingdom should be accomplished. Lameth playfully called this burying them all alive. The King had little love for his parliaments. He promptly ratified the action of the Assembly. There was a little protestation, a little bluster, a little attempt at assertion, which was decisively silenced. The parliaments of France had ceased to be.

The Venetian ambassadors, writing home to their government, see in this annulment of the parliaments a further proof that the National Assembly is the enemy of everybody and of every aristocracy which is not created by itself. When they speak of the royal consent, they smile, or seem to smile, compassionately. The King has no other course open to him, they say, than to approve whatever he is told to approve. The whole business fills them with a horror that expresses itself ironically in the conclusion that the French are still and ever the antique ferocious Gauls whom Louis XIV. strove to uplift from barbarism, but to whom he could only succeed in giving an exterior varnish, which had been eaten away by time.

The measure which appeared so monstrous in

the eyes of the Venetian ambassadors has a very different seeming in the eyes even of a temperate revolutionary like Duquesnoy. Those, he declares, who know the terrible powers in the hands of the parliaments, and the secret springs of every kind which they know how to set in motion against their adversaries, can only approve of the action which reduces them to impotence. Yet he notes with something almost approaching to amusement that in an Assembly which contained many magistrates or all classes not one had the courage to raise his voice for the parliaments. He remarks, further, the whimsicality of the fact that the bitterest enemies of the parliaments were found among the most celebrated advocates attached to their courts. In saying which he was uttering, all unconsciously, one of the epigrams of the Revolution. Never, he says, was the sentiment of hate manifested with greater rapture than when the decree was passed which struck the parliaments of France—so old, so venerable, so illustrious, and so foolish—into the dust.

CHAPTER LXVIII

POOR PARIS!

It is characteristic of the French Revolution, as it is characteristic, indeed, of any known revolution and of any imaginable revolution, that those who maintained it by their action or sustained it by their applause always believed that a certain point meant the end—meant the plucking of the fruit of the heart's desire. There was always something to be done which, when once done, signified the return of the time of Saturn, which uttered the Open Sesame to the Earthly Paradise, that goal of all dreams, and crown of all aspirations. When Lafayette lifted up his clear, young, insolent voice amongst the Notables, he and those of his inclining were convinced that the convocation of the States-General meant the panacea for all the pains of France—meant the resurrection of liberty, the return of the golden age. When the Third Estate clasped hands and mingled oaths in the Tennis Court its members felt sure that a union of all the three orders was all that was necessary for the creation of the ideal State. When the people, hot with haste, brawled in the streets of Versailles and sprawled in violated bed-

rooms and ravaged antechambers, it believed that the one thing needful for the hastening of the millennium and the conversion of France—and especially the capital of France—into a new Land of Cocaigne was to bring, by a force which was called persuasion, the King and his kindred back within the walls of Paris.

The event did not justify the curious belief of the populace of Paris that the dearth of bread would cease with the return to the capital of the Baker and the Baker's Wife and the Baker's Boy. Famine, that had seemed to pause for a few days after the arrival of the Royal Family in Paris, soon reasserted itself with all its old ferocity. A hungry people easily revolt, or are easily stirred to revolt. Those who believe that all the agitations in Paris were the result of elaborate conspiracies see in these disturbances caused by famine a new example of the policy of the Orleanist faction. The feeble Catiline who had allowed himself to be driven into exile had left behind him, according to one eloquent chronicler, more than one Lentulus, more than one Cethegus much more dangerous than himself. Whether conspiracy were afoot or no, the populace were aroused. Crowds gathered in the streets, threatening the civic peace and clamouring against the mysterious monopolists, who were, according to the popular belief, the cause of all the want of food. On a morning of late October, a kind of raid was made upon the shops of certain bakers. Two of these bakers were rescued from the hands of the mob by the National Guard. The

mob seized upon a third baker, named François, whom some one seems to have accused quite unjustly of keeping a quantity of bread hidden away from the hungry people. The friends and the neighbours of François protested against the accusation, asserting, as it would seem with justice, that the unhappy man was the most zealous in his district to supply the necessary food for the people. But protestations and assertions availed nothing with the crowd. It wanted a victim. For a moment the National Guard rescued François from the hands of the people, and carried him, as Foulon had been carried, to the fallacious shelter of the Town Hall. The authorities of the Town Hall were for sending the accused man to the safety of a prison, but before he could be carried thither he was snatched from his guards, dragged to the lantern, hanged, and his head hacked off and stuck upon a pike. This ghastly trophy was carried through the streets by the murderers, and it is said that every baker whom the crowd came across was made to kiss it. This horrible procession, this ominous triumph, was practically the greeting that Paris offered to its National Assembly when its National Assembly came from Versailles to settle down in Paris.

If the crime were a kind of challenge to the forbearance of the National Assembly, at least the National Assembly responded promptly to the challenge. Lafayette was for once found quick to act. In the first place he marched at the head of

his National Guards against the horrible procession, broke it up, and made prisoner the assassin who carried the baker's head on a pike. This assassin was, the next day, brought before the Châtelet, judged, condemned, and instantly executed, on the morrow of his offence. But Lafayette did more than this. He appeared in the National Assembly and made a formal proposition for the establishment of martial law. The demand had been made before. A month earlier Mirabeau had called for some restraint upon public disorder as emphatically and as unsuccessfully as he was now, by a curious irony, to oppose, emphatically and unsuccessfully, Lafayette's proposal. Lafayette's proposal, warmly seconded by Bailly, urged that the Assembly should enforce some vigorous law against sedition. The debate that followed, and the result of the debate, memorable in any case, are especially memorable for two things—for the speech of Robespierre and for the choice made by the Assembly of an emblem of authority. Robespierre was only beginning to gain a hearing and to command an influence in the circle of the Assembly. Such hearing as he had gained, such influence as he had won, were obtained by his persistent championship of the party of the people as opposed to the Court on the one hand and the burgesses on the other. Robespierre, in the course of time, has been accorded many nicknames. Carlyle has called him, to weariness, the sea-green incorruptible. Taine has been tedious

with his allegory of the crocodile. On the occasion of this speech against the martial law Lacroix fits Robespierre with the title of 'cannibal rhetorician.' Yet there is nothing of the cannibal in the speech of Robespierre on this occasion, and even those who may not agree with him can scarcely urge, after studying it, that he was without a case, or that he put his case without moderation and discretion. If he exceeded discretion in asking why authority did not anticipate popular vengeance by legal vengeance, at least the main part of his speech was sufficiently temperate and the main drift of his argument sufficiently cogent for the time and for the place. But it is perhaps most interesting because it presents in little so much of the principles and the policy which governed Robespierre in the day so soon to dawn in which he filled the place in the eyes of France that now was filled by Mirabeau.

The opposition of Robespierre was supported by Buzot, by the Duke d'Aiguillon, by the two Lameths, and, in a measure, by Mirabeau himself. Mirabeau recognised that there might be need of some form of martial law, but he insisted that the first, the most immediate, peremptory need was the provisionment of the capital. How, he asked, might a martial law avail when the congregated people cried out that there was no bread in the bakers' shops? But the majority in the Assembly was too profoundly impressed by the gravity of the situation, too eager to answer to the demands of Lafayette

and Bailly, too much horrified by the renewal of atrocities to be turned from its purpose. On the day on which Lafayette asked for the creation of a martial law, the martial law was passed. By this law the municipal authorities, under pain of personal responsibility for what might happen, were ordered to repress all riots and tumults by the display and, if necessary, by the employment of force. As a preliminary, a certain kind of flag was to be flown from the principal window of the Town Hall and to be carried before the troops into the quarters of the city in which riot raged. If the mob did not disperse after no less than three summonses to do so from the magistrate, the magistrate had the right to order the troops under his command to fire. This law, which in its main features so closely resembled the well-known Riot Act of English law, had one peculiarity in its connection with the Revolution and with subsequent revolutions which deserves a word of notice. The colour of the flag which was to be the danger signal displayed by authority against revolt was red. A red flag flying from the windows of the Town Hall, a red flag carried before the troops marching through the streets on a magistrate's order, was the emblem of the action of constituted authority against popular agitation and popular violence. It is one of the ironies of history, that the flag which was first carried against insurrection should have come to be regarded as the chosen banner of insurrection.

Revolution has chosen for its standard the flag that had fluttered against it, the flag that of all flags was most hated by the early revolutionists, more hated even than the flag of the monarchy itself. Yet it has become portion and parcel of general belief that the red flag was flown as a sign of insurrection in the earliest hours of the French Revolution. The playgoer of to-day has seen upon a stage which stands second to none in the world for care and accuracy of historical detail a representation of the taking of the Bastille, in which the forces of insurrection rallied behind a blood-coloured banner. Naturally no red flag flew on that day. When, later, a red flag was displayed, it was displayed under very different conditions, and caused the most tragic results. That martial law of October 1789 was to make many victims with its red flag, but it was to find its chief victims among those who had most eagerly applied for it and most firmly put faith in its efficacy.

The new martial law was aimed directly at the man in the streets, at the congregation of riot, at the turbulent, the tumultuous mob. But it was aimed indirectly at those persons, mysterious, unknown, alarming, who were supposed to incite to riot and to find their account in insurrection. Opinion differed widely, strangely, as to the names of those occult schemers of disorders whose influence would be so largely counteracted by the existence and the enforcement of a martial law.

The instigation of the plots which agitated Paris and impelled armed multitudes to march on Versailles was attributed often enough to the Duke of Orleans. But suspicion also pointed at another possible intriguer against the King, a man who stood nearer to the throne than the Duke of Orleans, none other than the Count de Provence. Those who admired the Count de Provence—for even he found admirers—were always eager to applaud his abilities at the expense of his reigning brother and to contrast what they considered to be the statesmanlike qualities of the one with the heavy incapacity of the other. Indeed the ability of the Count de Provence could only be made conspicuous against a background so lustreless as his brother's nature. He had a taste for intrigue which made him fitter to deceive men than to lead them. His intelligence was the intelligence of the courtier. His ambitions were the ambitions of the usurper. The hopes he founded upon the sterility of the marriage between Louis and Marie Antoinette made him the chief of a faction whose deliberate policy was to lure the King from his wife, the Queen from her husband, to tempt both to follies which might wholly estrange the pair, to do everything to make the Queen dislike her husband and the King dislike his wife. While he at all times professed an intense devotion to Marie Antoinette, a devotion which he was careful to make known by a public display of the most ostentatious gallantry, he insidiously caused to be spread abroad all manner

of malign insinuations against her honour. While he endeavoured to formulate a pompous devotion in foolish verses, he and his friends sowed slanders with the sack rather than with the hand and sowed them in a ready soil.

When the hopes founded upon the physical weakness of Louis proved to be vain, when Marie Antoinette became the mother of a daughter, the mother of a son, the Count de Provence did not hesitate in each case to express doubts as to the legitimacy of the infant. The birth of an heir to the throne, indeed, almost provoked him from his policy of duplicity into a public protestation signed by several peers from which he was with difficulty dissuaded by his wiser counsellors. If the Count de Montgailard were to be believed, Monsieur carried his real or pretended disbelief in the legitimacy of his brother's children so far as in later years to insult the Duchess d'Angoulême by speaking to her of Louis XVI. as her uncle. The purpose of de Provence and his party was at all times to weaken, to discredit the government of Louis XVI. It inspired the hostility of d'Espremenil and the young, hot-headed, hot-blooded men like d'Espremenil. It emphasised the virtues of its leader, his love for his country, his interest in the welfare of the people, the qualities which, in their report, made him so far better fitted for the throne than the prince who held it by but one degree above him. He met the events of the Revolution with something of the same phlegmatic

cunning that characterised his policy in the preceding years of intrigue. While uttering the famous phrase about the impossibility of making revolutions without breaking eggs, he was ever careful to leave the breaking of the eggs to others. He neither surrendered himself to the spirit of the Revolution like Orleans, nor had he dreamed of defying it as, at first, before he took to flight, d'Artois had dreamed of defying it. It has been said of Monsieur that he was able to conspire without drawing down suspicion upon himself, while Orleans drew down suspicion upon himself without being able to conspire. Provence and Orleans had this much in common that both were eager to mount the throne. But it seems possible that Provence was prepared to go further to attain his ends than it is absolutely certain that Orleans was prepared to go. Mirabeau, in a secret letter to Monsieur, in which he seems to express a sympathy with Monsieur's ambition, warns him that they were neither in the East nor in Russia to be able to clear the throne with indecent haste, and that a seraglio-revolution would not be submitted to in France. In this letter, if it be genuine, Mirabeau seems to take for granted the most sinister purposes on the part of Provence. It suited Provence very well, however, that Orleans should be regarded as the arch-plotter, that Orleans should bear the blame while Provence reaped the advantage of the popular agitations. No popular tumult in those days of popular tumult hurled itself against the doors of the Luxembourg Palace.

But if the hand of insurrection was not prompt to beat against the gates of the Luxembourg, the voice of menace was raised once and very ominously against the occupant of the Luxembourg. One day, the Christmas-day of 1789, the walls of Paris were adorned with mysterious placards. These placards were signed by a name that conveyed no meaning, the name of Barrauz. They informed the city and the world that on the previous evening the Marquis de Favras and his wife had been arrested for a plot to raise thirty thousand men, to assassinate Bailly and Lafayette, and deprive Paris of provisions. The document concluded with the ominous declaration that Monsieur the King's brother was at the head of the conspiracy,

The name of the unhappy de Favras is associated with one of the most mysterious events, or with what was for long considered one of the most mysterious events, of the French Revolution. It is improbable that we now, in this latter day, know all that is to be known, it is probable that we know all that is at all necessary to be known, about a very famous and very fatuous enterprise. It is perhaps natural that some of the strangest blunders made with regard to the French Revolution have been made by English historians. The genius of Carlyle did not save him from a richness of error even in cases where error was not, as it often was, inevitably dependent upon the lack of authoritative information. It is perhaps scarcely surprising, therefore,

to find a recent, very learned, and usually most accurate historian of the Revolution make a marked succession of blunders in a brief account of the de Favras affair. The writer, who calls the execution the murder of the Marquis de Favras, says that he was arrested for trying to raise a loan from the Paris bankers for Monsieur in order to arrange his own affairs, and he goes on to say that Favras was acquitted by the Court of the Châtelet, but that the people believed him to be guilty, and so the mob seized upon him and hanged him on a lamp-iron in the Place de Grève. It would not be easy to present any event of history with greater brevity and with greater inaccuracy. The de Favras affair is not of the most vital importance to the story of the Revolution, but it is important enough to be given at greater length and with greater accuracy. De Favras was most certainly not arrested for the meaningless reason alleged in the quotation. That reason was de Favras's defence. De Favras was arrested for being the organiser of a grave political conspiracy which seemed to implicate very intimately Monsieur the King's brother, the Count de Provence, whose aim it was at that time to preserve as much popularity as it was possible for a prince of the blood to hold with the people of Paris.

But the conspiracy of de Favras was important for a graver reason than any possible risk of unpopularity for the Count de Provence. It threatened to implicate and to imperil the popularity of the greatest

man of the time, Mirabeau himself. It was of no very momentous importance to anybody except to Monsieur, that Monsieur should be accused of engaging in a conspiracy against the growing Revolution. But it was of infinite importance to those who loved and to those who hated Mirabeau, and these between them divided all France, whether there was or was not any truth in the report that Mirabeau was involved in a royalist plot. To be associated in any way with the career of Mirabeau gives de Favras greater importance than he could otherwise have earned either by his folly or by his courage.

The Marquis de Favras was one of those uneasy spirits who always make themselves more or less prominent at a time of social and political upheaval, men with fine hearts and feather heads, brimful of an inept chivalry, burning to set the world right, and it may be confirming themselves in their capacity to do great things by their incapacity for little things. A handsome and a gallant gentleman, a ready and eloquent speaker, an ardent enthusiast, de Favras belonged to the brotherhood of those men who are always ready to devote their zeal to the service of a failing cause without possessing the discretion that tends to make their zeal of use, or even that saves their zeal from being a positive harm. His wife claimed to be the legitimate daughter of a prince of Anhalt-Bernbourg-Schaumbourg. His house seems to have been the

centre of a somewhat rowdy, even disreputable set who played heavily and were not very particular as to their company. On one occasion a valet de chambre of the Marquis de Lomenie borrowed a splendid coat of his master's, and actually obtained admission into the de Favras' circle as a Marquis du Val, an aspirant for the hand of the daughter of de Favras, whose heart this rogue after the manner of Marivaux or Picard seems actually to have touched. This give some idea, if not of de Favras, at least of his way of life. Perhaps de Favras was a visionary; perhaps his heart and his hands were sounder than his head. All that we know of him is that he behaved with much gallantry and little prudence; that he was devoted to the royal cause like a number of other high-spirited, hot-blooded gentlemen. In the evil hours of October 5 and 6 he is said to have encouraged Saint-Priest in a policy of resistance which certainly could not have been more disastrous to the Court than the policy of surrender. After the ignominious return to Paris he seems to have been brought under the notice of Monsieur de Provence as a possible agent in a financial enterprise which concerned the King's brother very closely. Monsieur was in need of some two millions to meet immediate claims; he hoped to realise that sum by selling out some property; the negotiations to that effect with two Parisian bankers were given into the hands of de Favras. Why de Favras, whom Monsieur, it is said, had never seen, should have been chosen for

such an enterprise it is difficult to understand. De Favras seems to have gone about the business openly enough ; he was watched, however, by spies, said to be spies in the interest of the Orleans faction, who grudged Monsieur his small measure of personal popularity. These spies affected to discover the machinations of a monstrous plot, and de Favras and his wife were arrested for conspiracy on the night of December 24, 1789. Then in a moment it was blown abroad all over Paris that there was a scheme afoot to raise thirty thousand men, to assassinate Lafayette and Bailly, and to reduce Paris to subjection by starvation, and that Monsieur the Count de Provence was at the head of the enterprise. Monsieur, prompted by Mirabeau, immediately made the most vehement and the most public protestations of his innocence. He showed Lafayette in the presence of others a copy of one of the accusing handbills, and called upon the General, by virtue of his great authority in Paris, to do his utmost to destroy a calumny by which the evil-minded might say that Lafayette would be the first to profit. On the same day Monsieur made his way to the Town Hall and delivered a solemn address to the Communal Assembly, in which he strenuously, even noisily, disavowed all knowledge of de Favras and of any counter-revolutionary projects that de Favras may have entertained.

It is pretty certain that de Favras did, in his wild, chivalrous way, cherish some counter-revolu-

tionary project, chimerical in its aspirations and vague in its intentions. He was himself but a poor gentleman, whose worldly wealth seems to have been at this time about one hundred louis, and even his heated brain can scarcely have believed that the Revolution was to be upset and royalty restored with so modest a war treasury. It seems pretty certain that he met with august encouragement; that Monsieur was not as ignorant as he professed to be of the matter. It even seems possible that the device already adopted during the affair of the diamond necklace was revived, and that de Favras was made to believe that his plans had the approbation of the Queen herself. What is not certain is, whether Mirabeau had any knowledge of the enterprise when he spurred Monsieur to make that speech to the Communal Assembly which Lafayette disdainfully described to the Queen as a platitude. In any case Mirabeau was accused of sinister association with de Favras in the statements of the two provocative agents into whose snares de Favras had fallen. Mirabeau seems to have taken the charges with his habitual disdain. During the progress of the trial of de Favras in the February of 1790 Mirabeau was called as a witness and confronted with de Favras, who seems, on his side, to have admitted an acquaintance with Mirabeau which Mirabeau was prompt to deny. Mirabeau did not assert that he had never seen de Favras. He readily admitted that he had met him on various

occasions, but always in connection with financial matters and always in the presence of other persons.

When de Favras asked Mirabeau if he had not discussed with him a plan for an expedition into Brabant to aid the Revolution there, Mirabeau calmly answered that in all his life he had only five minutes of private conversation with de Favras, and that it would have been impossible to have discussed any such project in that time. Brabant, he admitted, was mentioned, but there was no talk of conspiracy, of armed forces, or of any suggestion of taking Lafayette into the confidence of the proposed enterprise. De Favras, who, it will be observed, never professed to inculcate Mirabeau in any royalist conspiracy, earnestly entreated Mirabeau to recall the alleged conversation, but without effect. It is far more than merely probable that Mirabeau was right. In any case, Mirabeau spoke afterwards with angry contempt of the courtiers of shreds and patches, the mountebank conspirators who sought to re-establish the monarchy with the assistance of an adventurer crippled with debts. But he found words of praise for the bravery of de Favras, and the praise made his hearer, Dumont the Genevan, suspect that the death of de Favras was as much of a relief to his sympathisers as to his enemies.

The trial of de Favras ended in his condemnation, in his sentence to death. Popular clamour for the death of the accused man seems to have had more weight with his judges than the value of the

evidence against him. Some fresh light has been thrown upon this strange trial very lately by the publication in 1896 of the 'Memorial' of Jacques de Norvins, the historian of Napoleon. Norvins happened to be one of the four young councillors who were ordered, in the interest of their legal instruction, to be present at the trial of the Marquis de Favras, though they were debarred by their youth from any deliberative voice in a criminal case. Norvins describes the difficulty with which the magistrates of the Châtelet forced their daily way through a crowd that clamoured for the head of de Favras and suggested that the judges should adorn the lantern—doing them in this an honour, he says, that they did not deserve. On one occasion Norvins had to leave a portion of his legal gown in the hands of the men who were yelling for the death of de Favras. Norvins declares that during the trial he sat so near the prisoner that their knees often touched, and that watching de Favras narrowly from first to last he, de Norvins, was convinced of his innocence and of the flagrant injustice of which he was the victim. Norvins declares that he was so inflamed by his indignation that he actually rose and addressed the judges in angry terms, calling upon them to absolve de Favras without fear of the threats of the mob, and assuring them that if they acted otherwise every honest man would call them corrupt, and that he, for one, would have no share in their dishonour. With that, he says, he left the court and resigned all

connection with a body that was about to stain itself with the condemnation of an innocent man.

Condemned upon the conflicting and contemptible evidence of two spies, assured even by his judges that his fate was a sacrifice which he owed to the public peace, de Favras made a good end. He was sentenced to be hanged, after a humiliating ceremony of public repentance, before the church of Notre Dame. He met his doom with courage and even with dignity. After the ceremony at Notre Dame he dictated at the Town Hall a long document which he called his testament, which if somewhat rambling was not without a pathos and a dignity of its own. Darkness had come on before he was finished, and the Place de Grève had to be lit with torches as he was carried to the gibbet. He met his death bravely, firmly asserting his innocence. A spectator is said to have declared that he set the faithful an example how to die. The example was to be followed often enough. If de Favras was a poor conspirator he was a brave man, and he died a victim to his convictions and to the convenience of others. Yet Duquesnoy states that all those who had known de Favras in former days assert that he was a contemptible man, stained by twenty actions which well deserved the rope, and Duquesnoy appears to think that de Favras' reported inquiry, whether complete confession would save his life, adds another crime to the list. A nobleman, the Count de Rochechouart, when he heard of the

hanging of de Favras, observed grimly : ' Bon ! voilà un noble pendu ! pendez-en cinq ou six par mois, mais laissez les autres tranquilles.' Norvins reports the rumour that an emissary from Monsieur stood at the foot of the gallows till the execution was over, and then sped hot foot to the Luxembourg, where he was asked the two questions, ' Did he speak ?' and ' Is it all over ?' and that, on being answered in the affirmative, Monsieur said : ' That is all right ; let us sit down to supper.'

The de Favras episode did not quite end with the unhappy man's expiation of his faults and follies upon the Place de Grève. Rash-headed royalists, as enthusiastic as their proto-martyr and if possible even less judicious, did their best to force an unfortunate King and unfortunate Queen into direct connection with the alleged conspiracy. It is tolerably plain, from what Madame Campan says, that Marie Antoinette was really much alarmed as to the statements that de Favras might make in his last moments. This alarm would at least suggest some possible implication of the Queen in whatever hare-brained scheme de Favras may have dreamed of setting afoot. What Madame Campan goes on to relate serves to show that some of the royalists, in their zeal for the royal cause, were prepared to do what the dying de Favras had abstained from doing, and implicate yet more deeply and decidedly the Queen in whatever plot may have been attempted. Certain royalists of position, chief among them

M. de la Villeurnoy, an over-zealous man, who was yet to die a victim of the 18 Thermidor at Sinamari, schemed a scheme. They proposed on the Sunday immediately following the execution of de Favras to bring his widow and his son, both in mourning for their father, to the public dinner of the King and Queen, as flagrant mourners for a man murdered in the service of his sovereign. It is not surprising that even Madame Campan saw the folly of the proposal. It could only be a cruel trial for the Queen to have the wife and child of de Favras presented to her at a public banquet, while he whom the waiting woman calls the horrible Santerre, as commandant of the battalion of the Parisian Guard, stood close as her shadow behind her chair during the whole of the dinner.

The affection which it pleased Provence to profess openly for the principles of the Revolution and for the revolutionary leaders did not prevent him from pursuing plans against the Revolution after the failure of the Favras affair. There is a letter from him addressed to one of his emissaries, in which he questions the recipient's employment of his time and of the money sent him by Provence. The evil grows apace, Monsieur declares ; the Assembly persists in detaching morsel after morsel from the royal power, till things have come to such a pass that nothing will remain if action is further delayed. The passion of Provence increases as he writes, and he reminds his agent that he has often said and written to him that

it is not with paid tribunes—this was no doubt a stroke at Mirabeau—with libels, with a few pitiful subsidised groups, that the courtly party could hope to get rid of Bailly and Lafayette. He argued that as Bailly and Lafayette had excited insurrection among the people, it was only fitting that they in their turn should perish by insurrection. By this pleasant plan Provence hoped to move the Court to a sense of alarm, and to compel the removal of the King to Metz or Peronne. Once at Metz or Peronne the King must resign, which as Monsieur casuistically adds is all for the King's own good, for as he loves the nation so much, he must needs be enchanted to see it well governed.

It is probable that the Favras episode had no small effect in disgusting Mirabeau with the Count of Provence. Mirabeau had failed to find a statesman in the Duke of Orleans; he learned now that he had also failed to find a statesman in Monsieur. He was sick at heart of the stupidity of men with whom his fate forced him to associate himself in his efforts to save not merely the Throne on the one side or the Revolution on the other, but to save both the Throne and the Revolution by saving something that he set high above either of them, by saving France. He had sought once and again to find a strong man who should understand him and be of service to him and to the cause he held dear. He now made a third effort with a man who was strong in nothing and serviceable in nothing. He tried the King.

CHAPTER LXIX

DR. GUILLOTIN'S IDEA

THE execution of de Favras has an importance of a pathetic and a peculiar kind. It has been asserted that de Favras was the first noble formally sentenced to be hanged, and so executed in France. It was also his curious lot to be the last, or one of the last, to suffer death in that fashion. Up to this point all the punishments by death, legal or illegal, associated with the Revolution were of the same kind. The gallows, as in the case of de Favras, or the lantern, that popular parody upon the gallows, in the case of Foulon and so many others, was the accepted instrument of popular vengeance when popular vengeance allowed itself time enough for any acceptation however ironical, for any imitation however grotesque, of the processes of the criminal law. The lantern was the emblem of doom in that dawn of change. It asserts itself most significantly and most piteously by its intrusion into a child's game. The *Jeu de la Mère l'Oie*, the Royal Game of the Goose, is a game that in some form or other has probably found its place in the pastime of youth since ever youth desired to find pastime. A board

marked into certain squares, and a teetotum, or a cast of dice, are all that is needed for a game which seeks to arrive at a goal and interposes certain obstacles. For years French children had played this game after the old fashion ; now when all things were new they must needs play it after the new fashion. A modish game of the goose was put upon the town, a game which jumped with the fashion of the hour, a game in which success was admission to the National Assembly, and in which failure was to come upon one of the divisions devoted to the terrible lantern. It is tragi-comic enough to think of children spinning their little tops or tossing their little dice, and enjoying a grisly game in which certain of the pictured squares represented poor wretches swinging from the lantern, and others assemblages of savages carrying in ghastly trophy the heads of murdered men on pikes. To think of this game as a possible favourite with the childhood of 1789, to look at its pictured table with its glory of the National Assembly and its decline at the pike point or the lantern iron, is to get a very intimate if not a very exhilarating appreciation of the influence of the forces and the play of the passions that the new order of things evoked. And yet this slaughter-house of a game was soon out of date, unmodish, inept. The shambles of the lantern, if not the shambles of the pikes, were soon to be as antiquated as the *peine forte et dure*. A few years, a few months later, and those grim divisions of that

ghastly Game of the Goose would have been almost meaningless to their players. De Favras was not long in his grave when the death penalty found a new instrument, the instrument that has been associated with the French Revolution ever since, that will be associated with the French Revolution for ever. While the memory of the de Favras conspiracy, while the memory of the de Favras execution were still green in the minds of all men, a deputy of the Third Estate, whose name until that time it would be an exaggeration to describe as unknown, made a serious proposition to his colleagues of the National Assembly. The name of the deputy was Dr. Guillotin, a representative of the town of Paris. He had the gravest fault to find with the system of legal execution at that moment prevailing in France, but he was not content merely to find fault—his mind was big with the remedy for the fault.

Dr. Guillotin got a hearing for his scheme with some difficulty. It was not easy in that agitated Assembly, where everybody wanted to speak and to speak at once without a moment's delay, for even the most enthusiastic and the least repressible of innovators to find his opportunity. But Dr. Guillotin did get his opportunity and all unawares earned immortality. He began his memorable speech by proposing certain reforms in the criminal code. He advocated, in the first place, a uniformity of penalties for all individuals without distinction of class ;

and, in the second place, the abolition of any other form of death penalty than the simple form of decapitation with the aid of a machine. Guillotin's speech in support of his proposition was long and unintentionally whimsical. It was believed by many that his warmth in advocating the uniformity of death penalties and the abolition of punishment by the gallows was because of his attachment to the House of Lorraine, and his fears for the safety of the Prince de Lambesc, who might, if captured, suffer like de Favras the punishment of the rope. If the Count de Montgaillard's bitter tongue were to be believed, Lambesc was scarce worth saving from the rope. Montgaillard accuses him of making use of his position and influence to take back, by the hands of police or of law, the money which it pleased him to lavish with his own hands upon the unhappy women who fell into his power. Perhaps Montgaillard slanders. Perhaps Guillotin did not work in the interests of Lambesc. But the precise motives which animated Guillotin in the ebbing days of 1789 are of little moment now. What is momentous is the manner in which he proposed that his reform should be carried out.

Dr. Guillotin's mind was full of a death-dealing machine for the carrying out of capital punishment, which was used in Italy under the name of Mannaia, and was not unknown in differing forms in other countries—in Germany as Fallbeil, in England as the Maiden and the Widow. His

enthusiasm for his machine seemed at the time somewhat laughable, and many extravagances of phrase are set down, justly or unjustly, to his score. He is reported, after completing the description of his machine, to have told his hearers, 'We cannot make too much haste, gentlemen, to allow the nation to enjoy this advantage.' If he ever did say this, it must have recurred to him with a heart-breaking irony in later days. He is also credited with having assured his hearers that one of the inestimable advantages of his pet machine was that 'It whisks off your head without hurting you in the least.' Some of the more squeamish among his hearers found him too repulsively realistic in his description of a machine so unfamiliar, so soon to be familiar. He drew a vivid picture of the whole process. His auditors seemed as he spoke to see the whole strange ceremony, the body placed under the fatal instrument, the fall of the knife, the drop of the severed head, the spurting blood, and all the rest of the grim accompaniments. They found these details in the worst possible taste in such an assembly and on such a subject. Yet they lived long enough to find the guillotine and a National Assembly, by whatever name it were named, to be inseparable companions, and the hideous details that had shocked them to prove the unavoidable accompaniments of daily life. Of those who laughed, Right, Centre, and Left, at the grotesqueness of Guillotin's enthusiasm for

his machine, a great part were destined to become its victims.

Dr. Guillotin's proposals provoked much debate. The first portion, that which advised equality of punishment, was after a time carried, against motions of adjournment, in a form given to it by the Duke de Liancourt, who had always, according to a contemporary critic, the wit to seize advantage for himself in whatever question came to hand. The motion carried by the Duke de Liancourt was to the effect that all offences of the same nature should be punished by the same kind of penalty, whatever might be the rank and condition of the guilty person. The motion had its antagonists. They contended that in an assembly which had for its fundamental law the principle of equality, the phrase about the rank and condition of the guilty person was superfluous and even ridiculous. They maintained further that it was impossible to punish with the same pecuniary penalty two men whose fortunes were extremely disproportionate ; that it would be impossible to punish with the same punishment of public opinion two men whom public opinion had placed at a great distance from each other, as the blame which would be a heavy penalty for the one would be accepted with indifference by the other. But these arguments, such as they were, proved weightless, and the Duke de Liancourt carried his motion. The other part of Guillotin's proposal found its opponents, that part which proposed the

uniformity of the death penalty. There were some amongst its critics who insisted that though the penalty of death ought in general to be reserved solely for the murderer, yet that there were crimes, such for instance as parricide or regicide, which ought to receive some severer punishment than that allotted to the common murderer. The day had not yet come when regicide was to be accounted as a virtue to members of a National Assembly.

As for the alien machine so ardently advocated by Dr. Guillotin, its use was, in fulness of time, approved and adopted. The dream of a man who was admired as a humanitarian and sneered at as a sentimentalist became a reality. The Italian engine came, not at first, but in time and soon enough, to be known by the name of its champion, came in time to have in the public mind a kind of hideous canonisation as 'The Holy Guillotine.' It is piteous to remember that the life of its champion, through many and evil succeeding years, was devoted, with a desperate agony of devotion, to the attempt—an attempt that was sometimes if seldom successful—to rescue poor doomed wretches from the very instrument whose use he had so hotly urged. There was a legend that Guillotin was one of the victims of his own instrument. It was unfounded. Guillotin lived until 1814, and the misery of all his later life was the association—the not to be sundered association—of his unhappy name with a weapon of so much injustice, with an object of so much hate.

The manufacture of Guillotin's machine was entrusted by the National Assembly to the doctor Antoine Louis, who held the office of surgeon to the King, and whose task it was, in days when the letting of blood was an essential part of treatment, to bleed his sovereign. Antoine Louis made his machine according to the suggestions of Dr. Guillotin, and experimented as to its efficacy upon some unfortunate sheep. When he found that it worked to his satisfaction he submitted it to the inspection of his royal master, who had a pretty taste in mechanics. The story goes that the King was greatly interested in it, and promptly pointed out a serious defect in its composition. The knife in Antoine Louis's arrangement fell horizontally upon the neck of the victim. The King showed that the force of the blow would be more effective if the blade were made of a triangular shape, so as to fall with a biassed stroke and thus to shear with greater precision. If the tale be true, it seems only portion and parcel of the pathetic irony of the life of the sixteenth Louis that he should do this thing.

At first the machine was called *Louison* or *Louissette*, after surgeon Antoine Louis ; but a little later honour was given where honour seemed due, by a song which appeared in the royalist journal, the '*Actes des Apôtres*,' which spoke of *La Guillotine*. The name in time captured the popular taste, and the guillotine took its place in the history and the language of mankind.

CHAPTER LXX

THE WINGS OF THE ANGEL

It has been asserted by an anonymous sage that paper is the material out of which are made the wings of the angel of knowledge. The angel of knowledge did not want for plumage in the year of Revolution. Paper as a means of multiplying the spoken word by the written word, and the written word by the printed word, was in demand in Paris as it had never been in demand before. The Revolution in emancipating many things, in inventing many things, especially emancipated the public Press, and especially invented modern journalism. Freedom to say what one pleased, and to see it set up in type and published serially for all men to read, was a privilege that might have been sighed after by philosophers and dreamed of by encyclopædists, but which had no shadow of existence when the spring of 1789 coloured the face of France with its pale sunshine. There were one or two newspapers, indeed, that contained no news and cowered before courtly censorship, but there were in the true sense no journals and no journalists. And yet when the summer of that same year was leafy the freedom of

the Press had been enforced and proclaimed, and before the autumn had chilled into winter all Paris throbbed with journalism and swarmed with journalists. It might almost be imagined that the dominant noises of the liberated city were the dull creak of the printing presses and the crisp rustle of the pages that everyone was hot to read.

To give a complete account of all the newspapers that fluttered over France out of the Pandora's box of the Revolution would demand and has obtained volumes. It is half a century, as I write, since M. Léonard Gallois devoted two large volumes of more than five hundred pages each to the journals and the journalists of the French Revolution, in the period between 1789 and 1796. The book is a monument of careful and patient study of a fantastic and perplexing subject, yet it can scarcely be regarded as more than a sketch of that subject. The materials for a profounder investigation lie in the double columns of M. Maurice Tourneux's majestic 'Bibliography of the History of Paris during the French Revolution.' In the eighth chapter of his second volume, a chapter which extends to some three hundred closely printed pages, the curious will find the greatest mass of material concerning the newspapers, pamphlets, and political almanacks of the French Revolution that has ever been brought together, or that probably ever will be brought together. The sense aches at the long, the seemingly interminable list of news-sheets which whetted

but never satisfied the reading fury of the Parisian and the provincial public.

The earliest of these new journals were for the most part the organs of individual politicians, and existed rather for the purpose of airing their opinions than recording news. The 'Courrier de Provence' spoke to its ten thousand readers with the deep voice of Mirabeau. The 'Point du Jour' gave the dignity of print to what Barrère was pleased to call his opinions. The 'Patriote Français' promulgated the theories of Brissot de Warville. The 'Courrier de Versaille' reproduced the views of Gorsas. Just before the fall of the Bastille a newspaper of a more general character made its appearance. This was the 'Révolutions de Paris,' which has always been associated with the name of its printer, Prudhomme, though the intelligence that inspired and animated it was that of its editor, Loustalot. This was by far the most popular of the new papers, for there were occasions when its circulation went up as high as two hundred thousand copies. The 'Chronique de Paris' came perhaps next in popularity. Camille Desmoulins described it in a letter to his father as the best written journal in the capital. It was written for by many writers. Condorcet was one of its contributors, and it appealed very directly to the burgess temperament and intellect, which were not always attracted by the personal journals, and were often repelled by the 'Révolutions de Paris.'

The most widely known now of all the revolutionary press is the 'Moniteur.' Panckcoucke was an enterprising publisher with a catholicity of mind. He had several irons in the fire. He owned the 'Mercure,' which was edited for a season from Geneva by Mallet du Pan. He owned also the 'Gazette de France,' oldest of periodical publications in the kingdom, and edited in sympathy with the opinions of the Court. Having emulated Mr. Facing-both-ways by the possession of these two journals, Panckcoucke proceeded to emulate the Vicar of Bray by starting the 'Moniteur.'

The 'Moniteur,' by reason of the fulness of its reports of the debates in the National Assembly, made itself a monumental fame, as the chief if not always absolutely reliable authority of the parliamentary proceedings. Its fame has often led readers and writers to place too implicit confidence in its reports, which have to be amplified and amended by the reports of the 'Logograph,' the 'Journal des Débats et Décrets,' and later, for the space of its short life, by those of the 'Logotachygraphe.' There came a time when the secret policy of the 'Moniteur' was to please the dominant party, and when its editor, Thuau-Grandville, was not ashamed to assure Robespierre that his theory of editorship was to accord publicity to the speeches of his master and to deny it to his master's foes. Nevertheless, the 'Moniteur' remains a great historical document. But the 'Moniteur' did not begin its career with

the beginning of the Revolution, although it appears to do so in the huge volumes with which every student of the time is familiar. It did not come in to existence for some while later, and then, in order to give itself an air of completeness, it worked backwards and published numbers containing the history of the months before its birth. There was indeed, it would seem, an earlier 'Moniteur,' which had a very brief existence in 1788, and which may have suggested to Panckoucke the title for his enterprise. The 'Moniteur' still survives as a journal, and so does another newspaper that came into existence in 1789. This is the 'Journal des Débats et Décrets,' which owed its being to the popularity of the letters which Gauthier de Biauzat, deputy for Clermont-Ferrand, wrote to his constituents, and which were read aloud to the public in the theatre of the town. He and his fellow deputy, Huguet, and Grenier, deputy for Riom, made a curious bargain with Baudouin, the printer. They agreed to write a weekly journal for him without payment if he on his side agreed to send a certain number of copies to Auvergne, for the benefit of the constituents of the editors. The curious bargain resulted in a great journalistic success, and a circulation far beyond the limits of the Auvergne mountains. The paper persists to this day, greatly changed indeed in form, unchanged in ability, one of the most powerful newspapers in France, one of the oldest newspapers in the world. The 'Annales Patriotiques' of Carra

and Mercier made its appearance in October. Three conspicuous leaders of revolutionary opinion each had, or were soon to have, his own journal. The wittiest was the 'Courrier de Brabant,' child of a child of genius, Camille Desmoulins. The most vociferous was the 'Orateur du Peuple' of Fréron, which appeared in 1790. The most serious, the most famous was the journal which all the world now thinks of as the 'Ami du Peuple' and associates with the name of Marat.

The journal which was henceforth to interpret to France and to the world the dreams and the theories of Jean Paul Marat was at first published under the title of 'Le Publiciste Parisien.' It has been favoured with a unanimity of execration by a large number of persons who have probably never seen a single copy of the journal, or ever read a line that Marat wrote. It is only just, however, to that large number of persons who inherit or accept a thoughtless or ignorant detestation of Marat and Marat's newspaper, to admit that their detestation would probably be in no wise diminished by the study of a file of 'L'Ami du Peuple' or of the pamphlets which its author published in the course of 1789. 'L'Ami du Peuple' is the most singular expression of a singular life. Marat was then in his forty-seventh year. All the manhood of this six-and-forty years had been one long struggle, not always unsuccessful, but never successful enough for his keen ambition, after scientific distinction. Marat

had travelled much, thought much, studied much, written much. He had studied medicine at Bordeaux, had cured by electricity a disease of the eyes that had been given up as hopeless in Paris, had lived in Amsterdam, had practised as a doctor in London, in Soho. He had been in Edinburgh; he had been in Dublin; he had been in Newcastle. There is a strange and patently untrue story to the effect that he underwent a term of imprisonment for theft from the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. The University of St. Andrews awarded him the honorary degree of M.D. Of his many writings perhaps the best known by name is the '*Chaînes de l'Esclavage*,' so far as the term 'best known' can be applied to any of the writings of Marat. This was originally written in English, and published in England as '*The Chains of Slavery*.' The present writer possesses a copy of Marat's '*Notions Élémentaires d'Optique*,' with an inscription in it in Marat's handwriting to the Abbé Bassin, interesting to observe in the clearness and the floridness of the script. His medical Essay on Gleets was supposed long to be absolutely lost, was so supposed when the first two volumes of this record were written. Since then, however, one copy has been discovered, possibly the only copy in existence, and the generosity of its finder has enriched with a reprint the collection of the London Library.

In 1783 Marat resigned his important and

lucrative post as physician to the body-guard of the Count d'Artois. He had enjoyed this appointment since 1777; he had made a considerable fortune by private practice, and for the next five years he devoted himself to scientific studies and writing. But the agitations of 1789 swung him away from science to politics, from studies of optics to the theories he had expressed in the 'Chains of Slavery.' A series of political pamphlets gave an irregular publicity to his opinions. To present those opinions more regularly, persistently, and effectively, he followed the general example of the leading politicians, intoxicated by the opportunity afforded by the freedom of the Press, and published his own journal.

It is not probable that Marat's writings find many eager readers nowadays. Marat has his admirers among grave historians and serious students. The inevitable reaction against the 'fiend in human shape' theory which so simply and so expeditiously disposed of Marat and his colleagues, has perhaps tempted some among these admirers to set a higher value upon Marat's writings than they deserve, and to examine if not to applaud Marat's experiments in statesmanship with a slightly forced enthusiasm. At least, the reaction is likely to produce a more reasonable estimate of the man, and the man's writings, than was possible in days when criticism contented itself with asserting that Marat's journal was utterly barren in political in-

struction and exceedingly tiresome. It certainly is by no means barren in political instruction, even if that instruction is not necessarily of the kind that Marat meant to instil, and it certainly cannot be said to be exceedingly tiresome. Its own impulse was too vehement, its immediate effect too vast to justify the disdainful epithet.

It would be both needless and profitless to deny that Marat was animated by a sincere desire to be of service to his country. The student of the time may side with those who maintain Marat to be a monster. He may side with those who maintain Marat to be a martyr. He may side with those, perhaps more unreasonable in their show of reason and more illogical in their pretence of logic than the friends of either other faction, who regard Marat as a mere matter for medical estimation—a man who was this or did that because of certain physical conditions. This way of envisaging the problems of the Revolution is perhaps of all the most fruitless, because when pushed to its extreme it leaves us as wise as when we began. But it would be as unnecessary as ungenerous to deny the quality of honesty to the rude sonorousness of these sentences in the second number of the ‘*Publiciste Parisien*,’ in which Marat sets forth his confession of faith. He declares that truth and justice are his sole divinities upon earth. He asserts with a kind of passion that his admiration is reserved for talent, for wisdom, for virtue ; that

he will always despise the idols of favour and will never burn incense before the idols of power. With a waxing animation he insists that 'with whatever title a potentate may be decorated, so long as he lacks merit he counts for little in my eyes, and so long as he is without virtue he is nothing in my eyes but an object of disdain.' And while he definitely declared war against all the rogues, the hypocrites, the traitors who injured or betrayed the country, he insisted that the severity of his pen need only be feared by the vicious, and that even in dealing with criminals its severity would respect the truth. 'If,' he almost shrieks, 'I err for one moment so far as to injure innocence, then let the offender suffer, for he is under the hand of the law.'

It is of course easy to comment that the most honourable protestations are the common mask of imposture. But it would be hard to read with any balance the writings, to follow with any patience the career of Marat, and to deny him a kind of savage probity. The man might be half a madman, but at least he was not a sham. It had pleased Voltaire in earlier days to retaliate upon some attack of Marat's, and to liken him in derision to Harlequin cutting his capers to amuse the pit. But Marat was neither mountebank nor charlatan. It was the very ferocity of his convictions, the very candour of his self-esteem, which commanded so amazing an influence in so amazing an epoch. At least he went

his own wild way whither it led him, for Carlyle's fine phrase is far more applicable to him than to Mirabeau, or at least to the Mirabeau of the Revolution. He helped, in his journal of October 5, 1789, to give the signal that led to the invasion of Versailles. Even, he declared, if the banquet of the Body-Guard were a less serious menace, even if the plot of which it was supposed to be a portion were but a chimera, it was none the less the duty of all good citizens to show themselves in arms, to name their own tribune, and to possess themselves of the public forces. He had a keen eye for ineptitude, too, when he railed against Necker, 'Little man, vain man, your laurels are withered; they will grow green no more;' though he pushed his argument too far when he declared that Necker was no statesman, but only a swindler for whom it was facile to predict the fate of Law. It was unfortunate for Necker that the prosecution and persecution of Marat by the Government should have coincided with Marat's attacks upon the financier whose sun was setting so swiftly and so sombrely. But Marat was not to be crushed. In vain was the newspaper that now bore the title of *The Friend of the People* proscribed. In vain was the man who wore the title of *Friend of the People* hunted from place to place, from garret to cellar, hunted at one time from France into England. Still the paper kept on appearing, denouncing, screaming; still the man kept pushing himself to the front, emerging from some hiding-

place in this roof or that cellar, returning undaunted from exile, provincial or over seas, to assert noisily his unconquerable spirit and to foam with imprecations against all and several whose honesty, zeal, and patriotism did not come up to the standard established by the People's Friend. Marat had his adoration in his hour ; he is not without admirers or at least defenders to-day ; it is not necessary either to adore or to admire, in admitting the man's indomitable energy, the man's relentless persistence. He is most often denounced by those who know least about him. Many would isolate him as a freak of nature : whereas his type is not uncommon and is almost invariably to be found, of varying intensity, in all revolutions great or little.

Perhaps no journalist has been the cause of more exasperation to the historians of the Revolution than Fréron in his '*Orateur du Peuple*.' Fréron seems to have been gifted with a kind of genius for omitting dates, a kind of passion of unprecision which has proved the despair and caused the deception of many. He seems to be incapable of a closer date than the day of the week. He has a way of alluding to the most important events as happening on Tuesday, or Saturday, or yesterday, but never adding the complementary date of the month or even the name of the month. For this reason even eminent bibliographers like Barbier and Deschiens gave currency to the belief that the first numbers of the '*Orateur du Peuple*' appeared

in the December of 1789, though it has since been made certain on internal evidence that the first numbers did not appear until the May of 1790. The vagueness, the looseness, the lack of accuracy are sufficiently characteristic of the editor of the sheet. Louis Stanislas Fréron was only two-and-twenty years of age when the Revolution began. He was the son of a critic who has earned a grotesque celebrity for his persistent hostility to Voltaire; he was the godchild of Stanislas, king of Poland. The elder Fréron had founded a periodical called 'L'Année littéraire,' and on his death in 1776 the young Fréron, who was then only eleven years old, carried on the enterprise of his father. Thus he early served his apprenticeship to such a form of journalism as was possible before 1789, and it was perhaps inevitable that the dawn of the new era in journalism should tempt him to do what so many others had done and start a newspaper. The only wonder is that he consented to wait so long, that he allowed so many others to get the start of him before he offered the first number of the 'Orateur du Peuple' to its public. He asserted himself as a revolutionary of opinions as extreme as those of Camille Desmoulins or Marat, though he veiled his authorship under the name of Martel, which was in itself but an imitation of the name of the publisher, Marcel Enfantin. His profession of faith was not without a kind of distorted humour. He admitted that he came late into the journalistic field, that he

could not presume to hope for the successes of Camille Desmoulins, of Loustalot, of Carra, and Noel and Mercier who had braved the pistol of the Abbé Maury and the flaming sword of Mirabeau-Mattress, for so he was pleased to designate Barrell Mirabeau. But at least he proposed to glean where they had garnered. 'I have health,' he boasted, 'I have good spirits, and my mother has assured me that I have a pretty wit.' With these advantages he declares that he is eager to enrol himself under the banner of Desmoulins and his colleagues, and to declare open war against aristocrats of every state, of every sex, of every age, and of every complexion.

In this fire-new fashion of civism, in this fire-hot impeachment of aristocrats as aristocrats, something is to be seen of the temper of the time as well as of the temper of the author. It was the modish thing, for those to whom it was a novelty to be modish, to declare war against aristocracy. With some the declaration followed a conviction, even a passion—a conviction, shall we say, with Camille Desmoulins, a passion with Marat. But with Fréron, and the many of whom Fréron was but the type, this righteousness of anti-aristocratism was put on as one puts on a coat of fashionable cut, as one airs a neckcloth of fashionable hue. Fréron was not indeed of the counsel of the Apostle; he was not all things to all men, but he was everything in turn according to the prickings of his disordered

intelligence and the illogical purposes of his half-educated mind. Fréron had about as much earnestness of purpose as the patriot Palloy. It gave him a cheap distinction to parody the flashes of Camille's wit and to ape the scowl of Marat. But he was, like so many others who made themselves notable in that hour, the weathercock of opportunity, the chameleon of chance. We shall find him yet plying the brandy-bottle, firing his body with the courage of cruelty, fuddling his mind with the lust for blood, base even among the base, murderous even among murderers; and yet again a turncoat terrorist, ostentatiously royalist or vulgarly Bonapartist, as it seemed to serve his dishonourable turn. The service of such as he is a stain on any cause, and the Revolution was unfortunately cursed with too many such servants. It sets perhaps the seal upon Fréron's infamy to remember that he succeeded in later years in earning the praises of Barras. For the moment he has to be accepted as the ardent revolutionary, as the uncompromising journalist, and his journal had its influence and performed its permitted task.

Between a creature like Fréron and Camille Desmoulins there was a great gulf. Both were indeed adventurers, but Fréron was an adventurer of the baser, Desmoulins an adventurer of the brighter sort. If he delighted in popularity and had been somewhat reckless in his solicitation of popular favour, there was a simplicity in his vanity that made

it almost wholly amiable. His sudden success had turned men's eyes upon so petulantly pleasing a player among so many sombre, so many lugubrious puppets. The glitter of his ability had won him the attention of many of the most conspicuous and influential members of the Assembly. Mirabeau carried him off to Versailles and Camille remained with Mirabeau for several weeks, remained until it would seem almost possible from his own admission that he somewhat wore out his welcome. Camille wrote to his father, on September 29, 1789, an account of his stay with Mirabeau and of Mirabeau's kindness to him. Camille was intoxicated with happiness. He related with delight that the great man and he had become allies. He brims with pleasure as he records that Mirabeau calls him his dear friend, takes his hand every minute, slaps him on the back, and is in every way hail-fellow-well-met with him. If Mirabeau resumes his dignity on entering the Assembly he returns to Camille and companionship as jovial as he went. Camille found the company good ; sometimes Mirabeau's mistress was present ; Mirabeau and his guests drank excellent wines. Camille playfully pretended to fear that the delicacy and profusion of Mirabeau's table would corrupt him. He raved with a fine frenzy over his host's Bordeaux and maraschino, and confessed that he had all the difficulty in the world to preserve his republican austerity and to detest the aristocrats whose crime it was to over-estimate such

excellent dinners. The vanity of Camille was as simple as his appetite. He complained in a letter to the elder Desmoulins that it had been easier for him, Camille, to make a revolution and to upset France than to wring fifty louis from his father. He was honestly convinced that he had made the Revolution. He was convinced, and with more show of reason, that the eyes of men were upon him. In the same letter he asked if it was fitting that a man who had a reputation in Paris, who was consulted on important affairs, who was invited to dinner—this was the great point—and whose pamphlets sold as well as any other man's, should lack the money for a lodging and even for a bed.

Perhaps no name is more intimately associated with the journalism of the Revolution than that of Jacques René Hébert, no journal more notorious than the 'Père Duchesne.' But Hébert came comparatively late into the field. The original 'Père Duchesne' was the invention of the constitutional journalist Lemaire, and it made its appearance about the middle of 1790. The idea of the savage and surly old soldier who smokes his pipe and denounces all abuses in the rough language of the streets soon had a host of imitators. In all directions arose imitations of 'Père Duchesne,' sheets that imitated the form and copied the language of the original, sometimes even copying the form and imitating the language in the interests of the royalists and aristocrats whom the original

'Père Duchesne' came into existence to attack. The most famous 'Père Duchesne,' however, is the 'Père Duchesne' of Hébert, and it only began to be in the January of 1791. Hébert had been many things. He had been a student of medicine; he had been an official of the Théâtre des Variétés; he had lived by his wits for long enough. He found his congenial work and earned a kind of immortality when he adopted the idea of the 'Père Duchesne,' and made it his own. Hébert had neither the zeal of Marat nor the wit of Desmoulins, but he played the part of the 'Père Duchesne' with a well-simulated brutality, and enjoyed for a season the contrast between the fastidious neatness of his person, the elegance of his attire, and the uncouthness of his journalistic mask, the foulness of the speech in which the 'Père Duchesne' bellowed forth his great joys and his great rages.

Thus all shades of revolutionary opinion found their organs in those early hours of a liberated press and an agitated people. There was the sober constitutionalism that was scarcely to be distinguished from monarchism. There was the newer constitutionalism with its half-formed aspirations for republicanism, and its admiration of English institutions. There were the extreme demands of an extreme democracy and the fantasies of those who believed in the regeneration of society after the example of ancient Greece and ancient Rome. But revolutionary opinion, however divided against itself, did not

dominate journalism. The news-sheets of those that hated every form and phrase of revolutionary doctrine came as thick from the presses, fluttered as furiously abroad. It would be needless and thankless to repeat here their catalogue. It is enough to recognise the most famous.

Roused by the eloquence of Mirabeau, the humour of Desmoulins, the earnestness of Loustalot, the ferocity of Marat, and the brutality of Hébert, the royalists in their turn tried their hands at the manufacture of journalism. Like every other effort made by the royalists to counteract the Revolution, this effort was not graced with success. The royalist journals and the royalist journalists are melancholy examples of the way not to behave. The writers were not properly in earnest. They seemed, at least for long enough, to be unaware of the gravity of the forces they opposed. They appeared to believe that the Revolution could really be delayed and dissipated by chaff and innuendo, by the libel and the lampoon. They only shared the baser gifts of their adversaries. They could not be as eloquent as Mirabeau, but they could rival the ferocity of Marat. They could not be as witty as Camille Desmoulins, but they could surpass in obscenity Hébert himself. Some of them, men like Champcenetz and Rivarol, had gifts and arts and graces ; but they used them to little purpose, and for the most part acted as if the Revolution were to be counteracted by taproom ribaldries and

buffoonery that was often filthy and was almost always dull.

It must be difficult for the royalists of to-day not to regret the way in which the royalist party in the dawn of the Revolution dissipated their energies in lewd polemics and squandered opportunities for self-defence not readily, if ever, to be recovered. Peltier was a man of no inconsiderable ability; if he embraced the royalist cause with zeal, his zeal was not the passion of principle, for he began his career by accepting the theories of the Revolution, but the belief that his own advantage lay in the service of the Court. He had a ready pen, and a ready pen commanded its price like a ready sword. Whatever bargain Peltier may have made, whatever fortune he sought for himself by serving in the ranks of the royalists, it is to his credit that he stuck to the colours he had chosen and remained an adherent, and a belligerent adherent, of the royalist cause to the end of his vexed and vagrant life. But he might have served his cause with more discretion if not with more devotion. He seems to have thought that the men of the new movement were to be slandered and sneered and flouted out of power, that a Gargantuan grossness and an apish indecency might prove the bulwark of the monarchy and the confusion of its enemies.

There was only one journal that succeeded in rivalling and even surpassing the shamelessness of the 'Actes des Apôtres,' and that too was a journal in

the service of the royalists, the 'Journal des Halles.' It must be remembered that the passions of the hour were hot and heady, that the manners of the age permitted a freedom of speech and a license of epithet that excuse in some degree the offences of the 'Actes des Apôtres.' What cannot be excused is the short-sightedness, the want of political intelligence which made Peltier and his braves believe that they could poison their opponents with the stench arising from the pages of their journal. That at least was not the way in which royalists of the temper of de Favras, of the Baron de Batz, of the Count de Paroy, of the Chevalier de Rougeville sought to stand by their king. They erred or they failed, but their errors were generous and their failures never ignominious. But for the most part slander or scurrility seemed to the monarchical journalists to present the two methods by which the monarchy must infallibly be saved.

There was, however, something more than mere scurrility, something better than mere slander in another royalist enterprise. The journal 'L'Ami du Roi,' which was established by the Abbé Royou in the beginning of the summer of 1790, had fortunes almost as fantastic as those of the revolutionary 'Père Duchesne.' The title was taking, the success sufficiently conspicuous to justify the imitator, and at one time there were no less than three separate series of 'L'Ami du Roi' going on at the same time. One was edited by Royou; another by Montjoye;

a third was carried on by the printers Crapart and Briand, who had been the printers of the first journal, and who sought to maintain a rivalry with the issues of Royou and of Montjoye, each of which claimed to be the legitimate successor of the original enterprise. After a while Crapart and Montjoye joined forces, forgetting their feud and the vituperations that had accompanied it, while the Abbé Royou held on his course with his own sheet till the day of his death, on June 21, 1792. The inspiration of 'L'Ami du Roi' in all its forms was more serious than that of 'Actes des Apôtres.' It was always loyally, passionately royalist, always strenuously and fearlessly counter-revolutionary. Royou has been called the Marat of the royalist press, but Royou added to the vehemence of Marat a care of style and a discrimination of language which, if it lessened somewhat of the vigour of his paper in the public mind, gave it a higher value as a literary instrument of political warfare. The 'Ami du Roi' followed closely and with a mordant criticism the proceedings of the Assembly. Its pages were the recognised centre for the letters and protests of those among the clergy who fought the Revolution step by step and to the last. At length the Assembly that had prosecuted Marat, the Assembly so tolerant in theory, so intolerant in practice, prosecuted in its turn the Abbé Royou. It resented the extreme royalist as it resented the extreme democrat. The Abbé Royou had to hide

as Marat had to hide ; the publication ceased ; the Abbé Royou died in his hiding-place and his journal came to its end. After his death Brissot's solemn 'Patriote Français' published in all gravity a death-bed recantation by Royou of his royalist opinions, a recantation which it would be unwise to regard as other than purely fictitious.

Yet another royalist journal, whose name has in some degree persisted above the crowd of its companions, was the 'Journal de la Cour et de la Ville.' It only adopted this title after experimenting on those of 'Magasin Historique, ou Journal Général' and 'Journal dédié au district des Cordeliers,' but it was best known as 'Le Petit Gauthier' after the name of one of its two editors, Brune and Gauthier. It was as furiously royalist as its opponents were furiously revolutionary. Then there were the 'Postillon de la Cour,' the 'Gazette de Paris,' an elegiac journal edited by Durozoy, the 'Ami des Honnêtes Gens,' the 'Journal du Journal de Prudhomme,' a sheet attributed to Stanislas Clermont-Tonnerre and devoted to persistent and pitiless criticism of Prudhomme and his writings.

So they swarmed in their hour, royalist journals and revolutionary journals alike. It was a delirium of writing, a debauch of printers' ink. Few of those sheets have any readers now. Many of them are but names. Most of them are absolutely forgotten. They did wild work in their time. On both sides, while doing their best to injure the cause of

their adversaries, they were often more successful in injuring the causes that they championed.

Party passion was not the only influence to violence in the party organs. If the writers on both sides saw no other means of disabling their adversaries except by terror, they were also spurred to excesses by rivalry in their own camps. The journalist on either side, once become popular, had his popularity to maintain, and it was only to be maintained against competition by steady increase of violence. A great deal of money was spent in the support of these papers. The ministers had to subsidise one side and to try to purchase the other. The royalist journals must have cost an enormous amount, and Montmorin is said to have admitted to Alexander Lameth that he had spent seven millions in trying to bribe and corrupt Jacobin speakers and Jacobin journalists. It has been asserted that Desmoulins, that Danton took Montmorin's money. If they did they gave him no return, as their attacks were unabated. Droz observes that, if Mirabeau had paid them, he would have known how to bring them to a reckoning. It is well, however, to look upon all the stories of the purchase of popular leaders with a wholesome scepticism, if not with an uncompromising disbelief.

CHAPTER LXXI

CLUBBABLE MEN

AMONG the new political forces that the Revolution had evoked, there was one force that was for the time even more powerful than the influence of the press. The new force was the influence of the clubs. The word club has come to wear many meanings since first some handful of good fellows in the hired room of a tavern gave a kind of organisation to their good-fellowship, and named it by its name. It was to gain in the revolutionary epoch a new significance, to represent a thing, or set of things, such as the world had never seen before, such as the world has never seen since. The history of the Revolution is for long enough the history of government by club law, in the new sense of the phrase. What a contemporary called the Clubocratic Yoke was very heavy. For a little while it pleased a monarchical ministry to believe that it retained some of the attributes of authority. For a longer while it pleased a representative Assembly to believe that its hands and voices were the hands that guided and the voices that controlled the country. But the real authority rested with those outside the ministry,

and for the most part outside the Assembly, who could boast, as a proof of their patriotism and their civism, that they belonged to one or both of two organisations, the mere repetition of whose names even now carries with it a sense of fear.

While the National Assembly was still at Versailles, a number of the Breton deputies fell into the custom of coming together at the Café d'Amaury to discuss in the evening the events of the day. The house which was the Café d'Amaury still exists. It is the No. 44 in the Rue de la Pompe, and one of its frontages borders the Avenue de Saint-Cloud. Tradition asserts that the room frequented by the Breton deputies was the first room on the ground floor, the room which looks upon the little open space formed by the junction of the Rue de la Pompe and the left side of the Avenue de Saint-Cloud. Amaury, the proprietor of the café, had long been known before the Revolution as a man of liberal opinions, and the deputies who held liberal opinions gravitated towards his café as if in obedience to a natural law. It was the hour when those who held liberal opinions looked with admiration upon English institutions. The little knot of Breton gentlemen chose therefore to band themselves together under an English name. They called themselves a club, the Breton Club. The limitation suggested by the title was soon abandoned. The Breton Club became the rallying ground of deputies from all parts of France who shared with

its founders liberal opinions. They were all very well pleased with themselves and their club and their café. They had not the dimmest idea that they were helping to create one of the greatest and one of the most terrible organisations that the world has ever seen.

With the translation of the Assembly to Paris, the Breton Club had to say farewell to Amaury and his café, and to seek a new shelter. It set in its staff at first at No. 7 Place des Victoires, but it soon found another shelter and soon earned another name. There stood on the Rue Saint-Honoré a building which had been erected some hundred and eighty years earlier as a convent and church for the order of Jacobins, established in Paris by Sebastien Michaelis in the youth of Louis XIII. and the regency of his mother. The building, says Lenotre, was in no way remarkable. The entrance to the convent was made in the Rue Saint-Honoré, on the very spot where the Rue du Marché Saint-Antoine opens. The entrance was composed of three arches ; the middle for vehicles ; the two others, which were lower, were reserved for pedestrians and were surmounted by niches, which held on the right a statue of Saint Dominick, and on the left a statue of Saint Catherine of Sienna. After passing through these archways the visitor found himself in a large quadrangle, in the middle of which stood the church which joined at the back to the main building of the convent.

It was mere chance which led the deputies seeking a place of possible reunion to this spot and to a new name and fame. The deputies wished to be near the Assembly; they made inquiries in the neighbourhood. Somebody ascertained that the Jacobins would be willing to let one of their rooms for the purpose. The bargain was struck. For two hundred francs a year the deputies obtained the use of either the chapter or the refectory—it seems to be not quite certain which—of the convent, and for a similar sum such furniture in the way of chairs and tables as they needed. The club, somewhat primitively installed in its new and simple quarters, still called itself the Breton Club, although its earlier meetings did not include many members of the old body. The association now numbered members from so many different parts of France that the old name seemed too limited and particular for its new conditions. It was accordingly decided that the club should be called the Society of Friends of the Constitution. But the general public did not take kindly to the new name of a body in which it was beginning to take an interest. The general public gave the body a name, or rather a nickname, from the place which sheltered it; they called it the Club of the Jacobins, and the name remained with it for ever.

It was in the early days of 1790 that the club began to take new shape. Membership was no longer limited to those who were deputies to the

National Assembly. It was free to anyone to establish his candidature for membership. All he had to do was to find a proposer and seconder to answer at once for his morality and his civism ; then his election was formally submitted to the chances of the ballot. Every duly elected member was supplied with a card of admission to the sittings, a card which he had to bring with him and to submit to verification. The club drew up rules, appointed officials, saw to the order and decorum of its meetings by definite and enforced regulations. The Jacobins had already travelled a long way from the Café d'Amaury.

At first the meetings were scantily attended. It is curious to read that during the early sittings the monks of the order, in their white robes and black hoods, used to come in large numbers, and listen with curiosity and wonder to the eloquence of the associated deputies. But very soon the members of the club increased. There was no need of the aid of friendly monks to make the gaunt emptiness of the room less conspicuous. In the fretful, feverish temper of the time, every man wanted to play his part in the new game of politics. The walls of the Assembly were too narrow for the throng of would-be statesmen. The passion for talking politics, writing politics, making politics, and criticising the politics of others, was mounting to fever heat in the human thermometer. A delight in the voluble utterance of words, in the effusion

of sonorous phrases made every street corner a possible pulpit, and every heap of stones a rostrum. At such an hour and to such a temper the existence of an institution like that of the Club of Jacobins seemed as a blessing from Heaven. Everyone who wished to serve the Revolution or to serve himself through the Revolution, everyone who wished France to be saved, and was convinced that the secret for her safety lay in his keeping, beat at the doors of the Jacobin Club, and the doors of the Jacobin Club were not slow to open.

When the new society was little more than three months old it found that its new quarters were all too cramped for the flux of its adherents. A new place had to be sought. A new place was promptly if somewhat unexpectedly found. It seems that the Jacobin Fathers had conceived an interest almost amounting to affection for their new tenants, who admitted them by favour, as a kind of honorary members, to the sittings of the club. It may be that in their quiet, peaceful lives, the animation, the enthusiasm, the eloquence of their new tenants came with an unquiet charm. Perhaps they were unwilling to lose the excitement and the entertainment chance had put in their path. They placed at the service of the club the large hall of their library, which was situated in and extended the whole of the length of their church. We are told that it was a lengthy apartment, well aired, well vaulted, well lit by six long windows, ornamented by eighteen portraits of

celebrated members of the order of Saint Dominick. The club accepted the offer of the Fathers, and for some time forward their meetings and their debates were carried on in the room where so many religious had turned the pages of their precious collection of books. More than twenty thousand rare and costly volumes stood ranged along the shelves of the Jacobin library all through the time that it was occupied by the club. Above the door of the gallery remained an allegorical painting that represented the Angelic Doctor, Saint Thomas Aquinas, seated by a fountain which spouted in all directions the living water of truth, while monks of every order hastened to fill a cup from the sacred fluid. The sombre, gloomy pictures of squalid if picturesque disorder that have been painted of the club are inaccurate as descriptions of the early sittings of the Jacobin Club. The Jacobins, says the writer who has studied with most care the history of their habitation, brought to their sessions more calm and decorum than were characteristic of the conduct of the Assembly itself. A room enriched with valuable books, adorned with religious paintings—such is not the environment conventionally accorded to the Jacobin Club, but such was its environment in the second stage of its existence.

The Jacobins met about every second day. The sittings began at eight o'clock and ended about half-past ten. The time was passed for the most part in talking—an infinity of talk. M. Aulard has devoted

a series of massive volumes to the record of the proceedings, volumes in which the historian who has yet to write the exhaustive history of the Jacobin Club will find all the available materials to his hand. Unfortunately the most essential document for the proper understanding of the story of the Jacobin Club is not available. Nobody knows what have become of the formal, authoritative minutes of the Club. They have vanished from the earth like the lost comedies of Menander. To recover the one would be as precious a gain to history as to recover the other a gain to art. Perhaps the minutes were partially destroyed by Legendre. Perhaps they were finally destroyed by Napoleon. No one knows their fate. The history of the Jacobin Club has to be built up as best it may from other sources by the patience and the erudition of an Aulard. The volumes are not always exhilarating reading, are not always entertaining, but their study is indispensable for the proper understanding of the time and of the institution that played so memorable and so terrible a part in the time.

All manner of men gathered together within the Jacobin walls. There were men of letters like Laharpe, Chénier, Chamfort, and Laclos; there were painters like David and Vernet; there were actors like Talma; there were nobles like the young Duke de Chartres. Mirabeau was a member; Mirabeau was yet, on the last day of November, 1790, to be elected president of the club. Duport, Barnave and

the two Lameths were soon the guiding spirits of its youth. It was Duport who conceived the plan, so momentous in its results, of founding patriotic clubs all over France which should be directly affiliated with the Jacobin Club in Paris. The scheme was carried out. Small Jacobin clubs sprang up everywhere in active communication with the parent body. All France was as it were covered with a network of Jacobinism. The business of these smaller clubs was to keep patriotism and civism alive in their centres and to keep the Paris club supplied by active correspondence with intimate knowledge of all that was going on in the provinces. This bold experiment converted the Jacobin Club into a kind of deliberative Assembly with much of the authority and more of the influence of a governing body. These affiliated clubs, like the parent club, began by including many men of moderate opinions; but, as in the case of the Paris Centre, the men of moderate opinions were soon edged or shouldered out by the men who held or professed extremer opinions and advocated more violent methods of perpetuating the Revolution. As is the way with all such associations, there were wheels within wheels. Private committees came into existence which acted in more or less secrecy and guided the actions of the club without communicating their acts to the other members. Alexander Lameth was supposed to have formed a little association in Paris, which Lafayette described as an association of ten men devoted to the Lameths. These men received every day certain

orders. They, in turn, gave these orders to ten men belonging to the different battalions of Paris. Thus all the battalions and all the sections received at once the same signal for agitation, and the same denunciations against the constituted authorities, of Mayor Bailly and General Lafayette. It is certain that the Lameths were powerful, and as popular as powerful. In November 1790, Charles Lameth was provoked to a duel by the young Duke de Castries, a zealous member of the Right, and was wounded. The Jacobins are said to have, through their agents, urged the people to sack the duke's house. The house was attacked by a mob; there was no personal violence committed, nothing was stolen, but all the furniture was broken and pitched into the street. Lafayette came with the National Guard, but he did nothing, for many of the Guard thought that there was no great harm in destroying the furniture of a man who had wounded Charles Lameth. Madame de Castries, with a witty irony, expressed her gratification that Lafayette and the Mayor of Paris should have honoured with their presence the pillage of her residence.

Though Duport, the Lameths, and Barnave swayed the Jacobins, there was a little man of slender form and insignificant aspect who was most assiduous in his attendance, and who was yet to be its most remarkable member. He was struggling for power with a strong conviction of the rectitude of his

purpose. He had laboured to gain a hearing in the Assembly, and so far with little success. He found out that the Jacobins was the place for him, but it was some time before he ruled there. His own party discredited him by smiling when he spoke; everybody was ready to laugh at him, except Mirabeau, who treated his diminutive, feeble adversary with the respect due to sincerity and indomitable perseverance. Mirabeau had no love for the Jacobins, but he was willing to use them. He had no love for the Jacobinism of Robespierre, but he was ready to recognise the earnestness of the man whose violence he had on one occasion to reprove by a call to order. Mirabeau's sagacity discovered the true character of the man, his unbounded pride, his illimitable faith in himself, his steady purpose, his undeviating forward course. Robespierre will go far, he observed, for he believes all that he says.

The world has learned from the '*Souvenirs d'un Déporté*,' published in later years, something of the life of Robespierre during those early Jacobin days. The author, Pierre Villiers, was a friend, a sort of secretary of Robespierre's. His testimony is intimate, if not always reliable. Robespierre was poor. He lived with the utmost frugality on his pay as a deputy, of which he sent one fourth to his sister Charlotte at Arras, and another fourth he gave to a mistress who is said to have adored him and for whom he is said to have had no affection. He dined at thirty sous, lodged ill, and wore an olive-

coloured coat, severely brushed. Villiers says that when the Assembly went into mourning for Franklin, it was an unlucky affair for Robespierre. He could not afford to buy mourning, so he had to borrow a black coat from a man much bigger than himself. The story must be inaccurate, for Lenotre quotes the list of Robespierre's wardrobe at this time, and it includes a suit of sable. His labours and the intensity of his purpose soon took away the youthful appearance that he brought with him to the Assembly. His face became dry and hard. His features expressed the concentration of his mind. He was not the kind of man to remain in the train of the Lameths. He broke away from them and followed his own course, the realisation of Rousseau's Social Contract. He was believed to be honest, and this belief in his honesty was one of his greatest aids in his efforts after power. But for the moment he was only an obscure member of the Assembly and a rising member of the Jacobin Club.

Only one degree less famous than the Jacobins was the club which also carried a religious name in curious unconscious irony—the club of the Cordeliers. Writers have differed a good deal in their description of the habitation of the Jacobins; they differ more strangely as to where the habitation of the Cordeliers was. The name would suggest and tradition maintains that the Cordeliers met in the convent of the Cordeliers as the Jacobins met in the convent of the Jacobins. Lenotre has argued with

Aulard and Aulard has argued with Lenotre at no inconsiderable length as to the exact spot on the surface of the place called Paris which the Cordeliers at a given time honoured by their presence. The point is interesting, even momentous to the punctilious. For us it will serve to be sure that in the early days of its existence the Cordeliers lived and moved and had their being in a convent of Cordeliers in a certain street in Paris, just as the members of the Jacobin Club lived and moved and had their being in the convent of the Jacobins in the Rue Saint-Honoré.

The house of the Cordeliers was one of the oldest and one of the most curious remains of old Paris. It had grown up during the centuries into a kind of conventual city set down in the midst of a populous quarter, of which the principal street was the Rue des Cordeliers. The church of the Cordeliers was one of the largest in Paris. Its site had been a gift from Saint Louis. It was consecrated in 1262; destroyed by fire through the negligence of a monk in 1580; rebuilt in 1606. Towards the end of the eighteenth century it was, in spite of its discomfort and its gloom, one of the most popular churches in Paris for the sake of its musical masses. Within its walls the convent city of the Cordeliers sheltered the Museum of Paris, a large society of men of letters, men of science and artists. The active members of this museum to the number of sixty held their weekly meetings in the old Theological Hall of the convent,

and in this old Theological Hall the club of the Cordeliers, known first as the Society of Friends of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, held its meetings. It seems to have kept no record of its proceedings ; if it did they are lost ; we know very little indeed about it ; all that we know is that it did exist and that it exercised a most extraordinary influence upon the age.

The Cordeliers had among their members Danton, their great orator ; Marat ; Desmoulins, who spoke rarely but wrote much ; Fréron ; Hébert ; Fabre d'Eglantine ; Anacharsis Clootz, the orator of the representatives of the human race ; and the butcher Legendre, a wild, illiterate man, who has been described as a good man in his lucid intervals. From the beginning of the disturbance in July, Louis Legendre had turned from his chopping-block to thrust himself prominently forward in all the popular tumults. He had helped to lead the procession of July 12, which carried the busts of Necker and of Orleans. He had been among the first to rush to the Invalides, to share in that struggle for weapons in which Rossignol, as Rossignol relates, came near to being smothered. He was one of those sons of the people, praised by Rossignol, who played their bold part in the taking of the Bastille. He was a man of great influence in the faubourgs, of an uncouth, passionate eloquence. It has been said of him that with a little more education he would have counted among the great

orators of the Revolution. It would have surprised Butcher Legendre probably as much as it would have surprised those who knew him if anyone had predicted that the fulness of time would turn him against the Revolution as interpreted by the men of the Jacobins, by the men of the Cordeliers, that he, too, was to be one of the inconsistent of the Revolution.

Not men alone were eminent at the Cordeliers. Théroigne de Méricourt appeared at the Cordeliers in February 1790. She came to make a motion, and she was admitted to the bar. An enthusiastic Cordelier saluted her as a new Queen of Sheba coming to see the Solomon of the districts. Théroigne replied that the fame of their wisdom had brought her among them. She called upon them to prove that they were Solomons, sages to whom it was reserved to build a Temple—the Temple of the National Assembly. Her speech was a rhapsody of classical and scriptural allusions, and ended amidst a rapture of applause. Her proposal was to build the Temple of the National Assembly on the site of the Bastille. A committee, consisting of Danton, Fabre d'Eglantine, Desmoulins, and others, was appointed to draw up an address to the French nation, and to invite patriots to subscribe for this Temple of liberty, of humanity, and of reason, to which all people should come to consult their oracle. The address was drawn up, but it had no result. The time had not yet come when the jargon of a fantastic

classicism was to be respected as the vernacular of enthusiasm.

If the existence of the Cordeliers and the Jacobins was a menace to the royalists, it also seemed a menace to many whose royalism was not of a kind to gain the favour of the Court. The men at whose head were Mounier and Lally-Tollendal were disconcerted at being deserted by their leaders. After the Assembly held its sittings at Paris they took the name of the Independents and the Impartials. They were confounded by the agitators with the Extreme Right, with whom they had many opinions in common. They respected royalty. They had a horror of the violence of the Revolution. They were discouraged by the aspect of affairs. The leaders of the Right, seeing the success of the Jacobin Club, resolved to form a club of their own that should strive to re-establish order. Malouet, who belonged to the Impartials, was invited to meet them. Formal negotiations were opened between the Impartials and the Right for a plan of association. They resulted in nothing. When the negotiations broke off, Malouet and his friends published a declaration of their principles, and announced that all who would sign it should belong to their society. This declaration was not adopted by any influential member of the Left, and it was rejected by the extreme members of the Right. The Impartials met, but their club and their journal only existed a

few weeks. They were afterwards revived, only to prove more powerless than before.

In the month of April 1790 the Club of 1789 was formed, with the object of checking the violence of the Jacobins, and counteracting Duport and the Lameths. The chief founders were Lafayette, Bailly, La Rochefoucauld, Talleyrand, Chapelier, Dupont de Nemours, and Sieyès. Sieyès drew up the rules and was the first president. The club met in a splendid room in the galleries of the Palais Royal, where they ate excellent dinners and paid a high price for them. Mirabeau encouraged the establishment of the Club of 1789. He went there now and then. He did not desert the Jacobins, and sometimes visited both clubs in the same evening. But Mirabeau was not the man for clubs. His gifts called for a greater theatre. He wanted the world to bustle in, and he only accepted the clubs as possible instruments for his plans.

Royalism, pure and simple, did not indeed remain blankly inactive in the face of Jacobins and Cordeliers and all their fiery kind. As the revolutionary journals called into being counter-revolutionary journals, so the revolutionary clubs called into being clubs that fought overtly or covertly against the Revolution. It cannot be said that the aggressively royalist clubs were more conspicuously successful, more conspicuously intelligent than the royalist newspapers. There were many clubs which were only royalist in the sense that the so-called

Moderatists were royalist, in the sense that so many of the leaders in the first stage of the Revolution were royalist, in the sense that Lafayette and Mounier and Malouet and their kind were royalist. Thus the Club de Valois, founded in the February of 1789, was a very mixed club and represented many opinions. It included among its early members Lafayette, Talleyrand, Sieyès, Montlosier, Chamfort, Condorcet, and the Lameths. It was, according to Chancellor Pasquier, perhaps the only club where similarity of opinion was not a rigorous condition of admission. But the royalists were in the majority. The Club de Valois only lived its somewhat languid life until 1791. Its most active members gradually quitted it to go their different ways: these between the portals of the Jacobins and the Cordeliers; those to write their names upon the roll of the Club Monarchique.

The Club Monarchique, or Club des Amis de la Constitution Monarchique, left no one in doubt as to its opinions. It was fervently, flagrantly, defiantly royalist. It might have written over its doorway the motto chosen by 'La Rocambole des Journaux,' 'Une foi, une loi, un Roi.' It might, like another royalist journal, 'L'Apocalypse,' have asserted its existence 'Ad Majorem Regis Gloriam.' It held its own gallantly enough so long as it was possible for an avowedly monarchical club to exist openly. When liberty of opinion came to mean, first only liberty to hold revolutionary opinions, and

then no more than liberty to hold such revolutionary opinions as were approved of by the dominant revolutionaries, the Club Monarchique ceased to be. None of the clubs, the mightiest or the weakest, was long-lived. They were carried to the shore on the first tide of change, only to be sucked back into oblivion as wave after wave spent its force and rolled back into the void and darkness of the deep.

But at one time the Monarchical Club was important enough to arouse the bitter enmity of the Jacobins, and the Jacobins resolved to destroy it. It was denounced because it distributed bread to the people. It was accused of suborning soldiers to fire upon the people in street riots. Barnave, at the tribune of the Assembly, assailed it as an insidious, perfidious, and factious association, and called upon the authorities to keep a strict watch over it. Malouet replied that the Jacobins were the cause of the disorders, and that their club ought to be closed. The Club of 1789 was afraid to let the Jacobins leave it too far behind, and it published a declaration that admission into the Monarchical Club should be considered as a renunciation of the Club of 1789. The heads of the Monarchical Club commenced legal proceedings against those who denounced it. The Jacobins took measures more effectual than legal process. The proprietors of houses were afraid to let them to the Monarchists. When they found a place at last, where they intended to meet on a certain day, four

thousand men assembled in front of the house, insulted some of the members of the club, and wounded others. There was a cry that these aristocrats wore the white cockade. White cockades were indeed produced, but it is said that the leaders of the mob had brought these with them to give the lie the show of truth. Bailly came up when the disturbance was over. He did not find fault with the rioters, and he assured the crowd that measures should be taken to prevent a society which disturbed the public tranquillity from meeting again. In fact, the club did not meet again. The vigour of the Jacobins and Bailly's want of vigour suppressed it.

The battle of the clubs like the battle of the news-sheets was a war of words, and the wordy warfare of royalists and revolutionaries was not always a war of wit. The men who helped to found the Jacobin Club amused themselves by variations upon the word aristocrat, and said of their opponents that this one was an aristocrane, that one an aristocroc, and another an aristocruche. The men who rallied around the Club Monarchique retorted by labelling its adversaries as 'républicoquins' or by dating, in derision, in 1791, from 'the third year of the Revolt' or 'troisième année de la Canaillocratie,' which might perhaps be interpreted 'third year of scumocracy.' On both sides the weapons used were weak enough and base enough—and in those early days ineffective enough; the calling of hard names, the scourging with stinging-nettles. Whether

the pleasantries were concocted by Tilly and his friends at the Restaurant Beauvilliers or the Restaurant Mafs, or whether they were conceived and begotten under the shadow of the bookshelves in the Jacobin library, they had at least in common a brutality of temper ; they had at least in common a magnificent misappreciation of all that was meant by the movement, all that was called for by the time and the hour.

CHAPTER LXXII

SEVENTEEN-NINETY

THERE are years of historical plenty as there are years of historical famine. There are years every day of which seems to be a year in itself, primed with life, momentous, monumental. And there are other years so meagre, so poor of purpose, that their days seem to lose distinction and the total of their sum to be less significant than the worth of one glorious week of some more resplendent season. A contrast almost as startling as this thought suggests is afforded by the sister years of 1789 and 1790.

There is scarcely a day of the earlier year that is not in itself a page of history. There is perhaps no other year in the world's story which is so crammed with interest, so big with change, so brisk in action, so remarkable for its adventure, so amazing for its success—and all this in but half its course. It is the tale of the Titans and the siege of Olympus over again, but with the difference that in this instance it is the Titans who win the game. From those early days after the agonising winter, when France awakening from sleep found a voice for its complainings and sent men to be its mouthpieces from every

part of its soil to Paris, from those early days until winter again closed in upon a metamorphosed country, there was scarcely a day, scarcely an hour, which did not bear its part, and that a great one, in the record of this new and most marvellous Year of Marvels.

It was perhaps inevitable that its successor should seem colourless in contrast with such a predecessor, even as, by a chance which does not seem so inevitable, it was to appear colourless in contrast with its own immediate successors. While every day of half the days of 1789 deserves the consideration of a whole calendar, it would not be impossible to sum up with justice the events and the apparent importance of the year 1790 in a few sentences, in a few paragraphs, or at the most in a few pages. It had its events and its importance and its significance ; but they seem trivial, almost petty, in their juxtaposition to the illumination and the insanity, the virtues and the crimes, the shames and triumphs and splendours of the year of the States-General and the Tennis Court, of the Bastille and Versailles, of Lantern Law and Emigration, the year that abolished feudalism with a breath and converted the King of France into the King of the French. It was the ebb after the flow, the reaction after so much action. It seemed to the sanguine to mark the term of strife when it really was the pause before the struggle. To the dreamers of dreams it seemed that all was well, that there was little more for the leaders of men to do than to confirm the

Revolution by a few ingenious edicts, a few ingenuous enterprises. It was but to find a little money, it was but to explain with eloquence the equality of man, it was but to abolish a landmark here and a title there, it was but to call old things by new names, and the work was done and the game won, and the Revolution accomplished. This or something like this was what a great many people thought or seemed to think if their deeds are at all the interpreters of their minds in the long and somewhat languid months of the new year.

After an agitated year had ended in agitation the year that succeeded seemed to open with every prospect of calm. With the arrest and well-nigh certain condemnation of de Favras, the immediate hopes and immediate energies of the Counter-Revolutionists seemed to have been stayed and the Revolutionists themselves to be afforded a free field for the assertion of their principles and the perfection of their plans. Early in the year, on February 4, the King made his appearance before the National Assembly in the company of Necker, without any of the pomp and formality usually associated with a royal visit. He told the Assembly that the gravity of existing circumstances had compelled him to come amongst them in order that he might assure them that the monarch and the representatives of the nation were animated by the same sentiments, and were as one in their ambition for the welfare of their country. He informed them that he would

defend the constitutional liberty, whose principles the public wishes, in union with his own, had consecrated, and that, in concert with the Queen, he would at once begin to prepare the heart and mind of his son for the new order of things which destiny had brought to them.

This speech aroused a rapture of delight in its hearers. In those early days of the National Assembly it was always possible for the King to earn a flattering tribute of applause whenever it pleased him to assert his sympathy with the popular cause, and his approval of the popular leaders. His innocent little address was incessantly interrupted with the cries of Long live the King! and when it came to an end it was succeeded by a singular and characteristic demonstration. Out of the riot and rapture of the general enthusiasm the voice of one deputy asserted itself, dominating the others in a somewhat singular attempt. Goupel de Prefeln rose and insisted that it was the immediate duty of the Assembly to show its zeal in seconding the sayings of the King. In order to afford the most satisfactory proof of that zeal, he called upon all the deputies present to take at that very instant a solemn oath to be faithful to the nation, to the law and to the King, and to maintain the Constitution decreed by the National Assembly and accepted by the King. The National Assembly was always easily moved by dramatic appeals easily responsive to dramatic suggestions.

In a moment the new suggestion was accepted. It afforded one of those opportunities for picturesque display in which the Assembly delighted, an opportunity almost as picturesque, indeed, as that afforded by the oath of the Tennis Court. At once the President de Puzy solemnly took this new civic oath according to the form proposed. His example was followed with tumultuous enthusiasm by all the interested deputies in turn. The general enthusiasm was too great to be confined within the walls of the Assembly. Others besides the deputies were eager to swear their oath of allegiance in the same fashion. The patriotism overflowed to the Town Hall, where the Municipality of the city and a vast concourse of other persons solemnly made the same attestation amidst joyous cries of Long live the Nation! and Long live the King!

The affability and the harmony suggested by this general oath-swearing and pledge-taking did not long endure, either inside or outside of the Assembly. Agitations and difficulties began again. The disorder in the provinces persisted in a proportion sufficiently great to alarm the Assembly into the consideration of some method of properly allaying the disorder. Various principles were formulated, various projects discussed, no definite result arrived at. During one of these discussions Lafayette made a flowing speech, which contains the famous sentence so often quoted for him and against him. In this speech he declared that, for the making of the Revo-

lution, disorders were essential. The old order was nothing more than slavery, and against such slavery insurrection was the holiest of duties. But he went on to say that in order to accomplish the Constitution it was necessary that the new order should assert itself, that calm should be born again, that law should be respected, and that the individual should be in safety. There was no very flattering prospect, however, of this desired renascence of calm, of this desired obedience to the law. By an unhappy chance it was, or seemed to be, to the advantage of the leaders on both sides of the great struggle to permit discord and prolong disturbance. Many of those who belonged to the royalist side believed that the interests of their cause were best served by these troubles and agitations, which were fomented by the extreme leaders and the extreme followers of the Revolution. One of the greatest hopes of the party of Counter-Revolution was that the Revolution would in time discredit itself and die of its own deeds. Between the two parties in the contest there was no possible pact and no possible peace. The extreme royalists fought by every means in their power against the majority of the Assembly. The majority of the Assembly on their side were at no pains to conciliate in any way the prejudices, or to respect the beliefs, of their adversaries. The clerical party especially were stirred to the fiercest hostility. It would probably have been difficult under any conditions for those who guided or tried to guide the

course of the Revolution to conciliate the clerical order, but at least no attempt was made at conciliation.

Whether the treatment of the clergy were right or wrong, wise or unwise, it was at least done in such a way as must exasperate those whom it injured, and make the sense of their wrongs the more persistent. Already the Church had been deprived of its possessions to meet the stern demands of the empty exchequer. The not unnatural irritation of an order thus suddenly despoiled of what it had come to regard as its own was met by a further assault upon its dignity and its influence. Menaced by the powerful opposition of the ecclesiastical body, the leaders of the revolutionary party resolved to make an effort to force the Church into harmony with the new order of things—with the regeneration of humanity according to the provincial lawyer—and introduced the civil constitution of the clergy. This was the name they gave to the series of regulations, the object of which was in their view to incorporate the clergy with the new system, to renew antique discipline, and to reduce the whole body to obedience to the new laws. This was the scheme which the majority of the Assembly now proceeded to carry out in the most summary and headlong manner. The same vehement spirit that had animated the zealots of the 4th of August now addressed itself to complete the alterations of an ancient and stately fabric. The monastic vows were abolished, religious orders were abolished, the election of pastors was placed in the

hands of their flocks. Every priest was to receive from the government of the country his authority and his wage, and it was decided that the whole body of the clergy must swear allegiance to the nation, the King, and the law. Those who made this momentous change strove indeed to justify their action from the early history of the Church. They made war upon its power in the name of the early fathers of the primitive faith, and they supported their destructive proposals by arguments drawn from the Pragmatic of Saint Louis. Naturally enough so comprehensive an attack aroused the strongest spirit of resistance. It might have been hard at any time and in any way to unite the strength of the Church with the strength of the Revolution, but in this way at least all the strength that the Church had was united against the Revolution.

The resolution that public worship should be supported by the State practically made the clergy servants of the State. It was accordingly necessary to regulate with all the formality of a new legality the condition of the clergy in order to secure their subsistence and to satisfy the nation on the matter of religion ; for the religious feeling was still strong, and the opposition were ever ready to take advantage of it. In fact, thanks to the new policy of the new men, many who had sincerely joined the Revolution at first were alarmed. There was the curé of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont. He had led his parishioners to the Invalides on the 14th of July.

Now it was reported that he had passed forty days at the foot of the altar, clad in a hair cloth, and praying to God to support the Church in its danger. The minority of the Assembly had published their declaration against the sale of the Church property, and though this declaration was signed by a minority of the clergy, and of the nobility, and by only forty-nine deputies of the commons, it produced a considerable sensation in the provinces.

The discussion of the civil constitution of the clergy began on the 29th of May. The Archbishop of Aix proposed to consult the Gallican Church by a national council. If this were not adopted he said that the clergy could take no part in the deliberations. Robespierre, on the 30th of May, supported the plan of the committee as developed by Treilhard. Robespierre's speech was made in the Robespierre manner, unfamiliar then, but soon to be familiar. He said that the priests in the social order were real magistrates, whose duty was the support and the service of the public worship. From this fundamental notion he proceeded to derive all the principles applicable to the condition of the clergy. He was as vehement as an Athanasian against Arians. He would have no ecclesiastical officers except bishops and curés, and no more than were required. He would suppress the titles of archbishops and cardinals, and would have the bishops and curés elected by the people. Having thus calmly reorganised the Church, he was going on with the

announcement of something else which he considered more important than all the rest, when he was stopped by the murmurs of an Assembly not yet attuned to the new theories and could not finish his speech. Nobody knows what Robespierre was going to say, though some have guessed that he was going to advocate the marriage of priests. But if he failed to obtain a hearing, at least those whom he supported had the game in their own hands, and to a solid majority the civil constitution of the clergy was only a question of time.

It can scarcely be said that the Assembly was either discreet or tactful in its treatment of a great religious question. The decree ordering an inventory to be made in the religious communities was in itself well calculated to provoke a religious war. It did in fact provoke one in certain districts. At Montauban the opponents of the new decree seized and threatened to hang the military commandant, who, although a Catholic, was suspected of being willing to sanction the entrance of the magistrates into the convents. The soldiers from the Town Hall who came to his rescue were attacked by the mob. Some were killed, and the Town Hall was taken. The Duke de Laforce, sword in hand, put himself at the head of a body of insurgents who were deliberating in the church of the Cordeliers. The municipality yielded to the insurgents. The dragoons were led bare-headed, in their shirts, with lighted candles in their hands, through the streets, to make

abject apology upon the steps of the Cathedral, and were then thrown into prison. The white cockade was worn in all defiance. The cross was looked upon as the emblem of a new crusade against sacrilege and infidelity. On the news reaching Bordeaux, the municipality sent fifteen hundred of the National Guard to enforce obedience at Montauban. But the Counter-Revolution triumphed for a time. A commissioner, an officer of Lafayette, was sent from Paris to Montauban. He found it best to come to terms with the rioters. There was no inquiry into the riot: the Nationalists of Bordeaux were not gratified with the destruction of the enthusiasts of Montauban.

The head and heart of the religious struggle in the south was a man named Froment, a man of rare ability, of desperate energy, of great organising powers. His name is for ever associated with the civil strife at Nîmes. At Nîmes, on May 2, the white cockade was the emblem of successful defiance of the new decrees. Some volunteer companies of Catholics assumed the badge of royalty and religion. This provoked a quarrel with the Nationalist soldiers of the regiment of Guienne, who insulted the wearers of the white cockades. The populace collected and attacked the Nationalists: many soldiers were wounded, and a soldier was killed by a brother of Froment—Froment surnamed Tapage. The mayor, who by his conduct had encouraged the white cockade before the disturbance commenced, refused to proclaim martial law.

Many of the Nationalists were imprisoned and only liberated on payment of fines. The white cockade was in the ascendant at Nîmes as at Montauban.

The clerical triumph was brief at Nîmes. On June 13, which was a Sunday, Froment and his party came to blows with the patriotic party and the Protestants. Each side accused the other of beginning the attack. It was the time of the elections, and it was the duty of the municipality to call for the troops and put down the disturbance, but they did not act. At first Froment and his men had their own way. They carried all before them, and began to force the houses of the Protestants; but of the eighteen Catholic companies which had been formed, only three joined them. The followers of Froment fought desperately. They twice repulsed the municipal body, when at last it acted against them. At last Froment retired into a tower of the old castle, and tried to raise all the neighbouring country by his emissaries. But the Catholics were slow in responding, while belligerent Protestants poured into Nîmes from all directions. Froment was besieged in his tower. The place was taken by assault, and the besieged were massacred. For several days Froment's partisans were pursued and butchered. He himself escaped to die obscure and neglected years afterwards. During all this time the two parties were firing at one another in the streets and from the windows. In three days about three hundred men were killed. The savage people of the Cevennes,

who had of old suffered from persecution, were not the men to show mercy. The projects of the counter-revolutionary party at Nîmes were drowned in their own blood.

The disturbances in the South were sometimes in favour of the Revolution. At the end of April the people and the National Guard of Marseilles surprised and seized several forts, to anticipate, as they alleged, the emigrants in their presumed design of occupying them with foreign troops. One of these forts had made some resistance, which was attributed to its commander Beausset. The next day Beausset, accompanied by the National Guard and two municipal officers, was to be taken before the municipality to explain his conduct. On the road he was attacked and murdered, without any effort being made to save him by those who had him under their charge. Montpellier, the citadel, which was garrisoned by some soldiers of the regiment of Bresse, surrendered joyously to a small party of young men. M. de Voisins, commandant of the artillery in the garrison of Valence, made preparations against attack which excited the indignation of the people. De Voisins was seized and ordered to be led to prison, but on his way there he was killed by a musket-shot ; and the leaderless garrison submitted to the orders of the municipality. De Voisins was accused of corresponding with friends of the emigrant princes, and association with the emigrant was already becoming the equivalent to sentence of death

Avignon, which belonged to the Pope, had already settled its own affairs. This ancient city, which had at one time been the residence of the popes, was sold, with Vaucluse, to the papal see in 1348, by Jeanne, Countess of Provence and Queen of Sicily. Following the example of revolutionary France, Avignon had organised a municipality and a militia. On June 10 the nobles and partisans of the Pope held the town hall with four pieces of cannon. A conflict ensued between them and the people, in which thirty of the people were killed. The contest was renewed. The popular party were victorious. Four of the aristocrats were seized and massacred, and twenty-two were arrested. The papal arms were taken down, and those of France solemnly put in their place. On June 17 the municipality of Avignon, by a letter addressed to the deputies Camus and Bouche, prayed the Assembly to admit the ancient city of Avignon into union with France. The example of Avignon was followed by Venaissin, which was also subject to the Pope.

The National Assembly or its majority was much distressed by all these agitations. It was so busy itself and so content with its own business that it found it hard to understand that anybody could have the heart to distract its attention by bickerings and brawls. But on the whole the majority had reason to be content with the results of the bickerings and the brawls. The royalist insurrections had been bloodily blotted out. All over the country the

soldiers avowed their enthusiasm for the Revolution by fraternising with the people and killing their officers when they protested against the new theory of military discipline. The Revolution was triumphant all along the line. The most unexpected people took the civic oath. It was not surprising that the young Duke de Chartres should take it, and in taking it cast off all his titles and sign himself a citizen of Paris. It was not surprising that Orleans should send over his adhesion to the oath from his English exile. The Orleans family had proved revolutionary from the first. But when a Bouillé took the civic oath, when a Prince de Conti came back from emigration to take it in the district of the Jacobins, the majority in the Assembly might naturally think that things were going well with them, and that they could go as they pleased in their business of regenerating the world.

The majority in the Assembly, big with their business of regenerating the world, were troubled by no qualms, harassed by no doubts. They acted with the determination of the fanatic. They assumed the authority of the prophet. They were quite aware that the world was out of joint, but they had not the faintest misgiving as to the pre-eminence of their qualifications for setting it right again. It was all one to them whether the job on hand was the parcelling out of France into so many neat plots of ground, or the readjustment of the judicial system, or the entire alteration of the religious customs of

the race. They felt strong in two great truths. The first, and perhaps the simplest, was that whatever was, was wrong. The second, and perhaps the most obvious, was that whatever was decided upon by the majority in an assembly of respectabilities from the provinces, many of them provincial lawyers, must invariably and without question be right. To question the righteousness of the National Assembly as seen in its majority was to strike at the Ark of the Covenant ; to question was to blaspheme, and to blaspheme without possibility of pardon.

It seemed a mere trifle to provincial respectabilities, to the provincial lawyers, to re-arrange the whole order of the Church according to their own pleasure. In the honesty of their zeal they could scarcely understand that the Church could resent their intrusion, could deny their authority. They had their excellent plan. They were religious in their way, but above all things they were eager to make the world new again, to play the old game of life under entirely new rules ; and, naturally, to find new rules for the Bishop, as well as for the King and the Queen, the Knight and the Castle. Even in the majority all were not equally zealous. Many would not have troubled themselves about the matter, but they yielded to the wishes of those who were hot to put the civil constitution of the clergy in harmony with other things. The Archbishop of Aix urged a national council, urged that the Assembly should not decide on that question by a simple vote ; but the

Assembly insisted upon arranging things after its own fashion. It was determined that there should be a bishop for each department ; that bishops and curés should be elected by ballot, and by a majority of votes ; and that bishops should be elected in the form prescribed, and by the electoral body appointed by the decree of December 22, 1789, for the nomination of members of the Assembly for the department. The curés were also appointed by popular election. On June 14 it was decreed, without discussion, that before the ceremony of consecration took place the person elected should, in the presence of the municipal officers, the people, and the clergy, take the solemn oath to watch carefully over the flock committed to his care, to be faithful to the nation, the law, and the King, and to maintain with all his power the constitution decreed by the National Assembly.

All this might have been excellent enough if life were in reality at all like a game of chess, with rules known, recognised, and perhaps amendable. Yet it may be taken for granted that the majority in the National Assembly would not have ventured to propose to France and to the world a new series of rules for the game of chess with the same light-heartedness, the same cocksure serenity with which they blandly essayed the adventure of the civil constitution of the clergy. In the fulness of their ignorance, in the rawness of their inexperience, they took it upon themselves to do and dare in an enterprise which

might have dashed the spirits of a synod of sages. Though the debates on the great question dragged through the year, the reformers never had a doubt as to their own sanity, never a doubt as to their own strength, and the tests of the divisions assuring them of the one convinced them of the other.

Louis, always the weakest of worthy mortals and worthless kings, had written to the Pope to ask his judgment on this grave question. Pius VI. replied that a purely political body could not alter the general doctrine and discipline of the Church, or make rules about the election of bishops, or the extinction of sees. He insisted that if the King had the right to renounce his crown, yet no consideration should induce him to betray his duty to God and the Church, whose eldest son he was. This was at least decided counsel, but Louis was not the man to follow decided counsel. A decree of the Assembly on November 27 finally settled the civil constitution of the clergy and completed the King's perplexity. The fifth article declared that the ecclesiastics who did not take the oath prescribed by the decree of July 24, 1790, within the times fixed by the first article of the decree of November 27, should be held as having renounced their appointments, which would be filled up. The unstable, bewildered King deferred his consent to the decree of the 27th for three weeks. Then the President of the Assembly waited on him to know the reason of the delay. Louis replied that

his respect for religion was one cause of his hesitation ; another cause was his wish to prevent the disturbances which the decree might cause.

But he could not delay and he could not defy. He accepted, but unwillingly, on December 26, by letter, the obnoxious decree. From this moment the helpless King seems to have cherished hope of escape. Too weak to defend his convictions himself at all hazards, he now determined to avail himself of foreign assistance. He sent to Breteuil, who was in Germany, full powers to treat with the different princes of Germany for the recovery of his authority. In a letter to the King of Prussia, dated December 3, 1790, Louis said that he had just written to the Emperor, to the Empress of Russia, to the Kings of Spain and Sweden, suggesting to them a congress of the principal powers of Europe, supported by an armed force, as the best means of checking the factions in France, furnishing the means of establishing a better order of things, and preventing the evils under which France suffered from reaching the other States of Europe. It is pitifully characteristic of Louis that while he was writing thus privately to Prussia, he was writing publicly, by the hand of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to his emigrant brothers and the Prince of Condé, official letters to call them back and to represent to them the duty of every citizen towards his country.

The new oath was taken by above a third of the

ecclesiastical members of the Assembly, and among them were Grégoire and a number of curés. Only three bishops took the oath: Talleyrand, the Cardinal de Brienne, and Gobel, Bishop of Lidda, ever memorable as Goose Gobel. On January 4 the time fixed for taking the oath had expired, and on the motion of Barnave the ecclesiastical members of the Assembly who had not taken the oath were called on to swear. A single priest, a curé, took the oath. The President asked if no one else meant to take the oath. There was silence for a quarter of an hour. Then the Bishop of Poitiers rose, gallant in his grey hairs. He was seventy years of age, he said, and he had been a bishop for thirty-five years, during which he had done all the good that he could. Bowed down with years and studies he did not choose to dishonour his old age. He would not take the oath. He was ready to bear his lot in the spirit of penitence. Barnave moved that the President should communicate to the King the minutes of their proceedings from the beginning, and request him to give orders for the prompt execution of the decree of November 27, with respect to the ecclesiastical members of the Assembly. The motion was carried by a great majority and the dominant party set to work briskly to carry out its purpose.

The places which became vacant in consequence of the decree of November 27 were filled up, and Talleyrand and Gobel consecrated the new bishops.

The ecclesiastics who were deprived would not abandon their functions, and treated their successors as intruders, the sacraments which they administered as null, and those who recognised the new priests as excommunicated. Thus there existed two bodies of clergy, a constitutional clergy and a refractory clergy a clergy that had taken the civil oath and a clergy that disdained to take it. It was an inevitable result of the strife between the revolutionary party and the loyal clergy that the people began to lose their faith in the religion of their fathers. So much at least the measure of the Assembly had brought about.

Louis could not make much of a stand for the Church, but he made some sort of stand where his own domestic interests were concerned. He certainly was not very pleasantly housed at the Tuileries. His state was neglected. He found the energy to make demands. On June 9 the discussions on the clergy were interrupted by a letter from the King on the subject of the civil list, which comprehended his personal expenses, those of the Queen, the education of his children, the household of his aunts, the establishment which his sister might soon expect, and the maintenance of his household troops. The King had been requested by the Assembly to fix his expenses in a manner corresponding to the majesty of his throne, and the love and fidelity of a great nation. This letter was the answer to the request. As Paris would

be his ordinary place of residence, the King said he thought that twenty-five millions of francs, with the revenue from the parks, the forests, and his country residences, might, with many reductions, be sufficient for his expenses, including his household troops. He thought that the Assembly should undertake to pay the debt on the royal household. He also expressed a wish that the Queen's dower, in the case of her surviving him, should be settled, and he suggested the annual sum of four millions, or about 160,000*l*. The letter concluded by saying that, provided that liberty and tranquillity were secured, he should not trouble himself about any diminution of his personal enjoyments, as he should find his pleasures in the delightful spectacle of public peace. It was proposed that everything contained in the King's letter should be immediately assented to, and the whole Assembly rose in approval without waiting for the President to put the question to the vote.

The Assembly was not too busy with the affairs of Heaven or the concerns of kings to neglect the minutest details of the business of the earth. The body that thought little of the transformation of a Church found time to deal with the lighter question of the metric system. On March 26 Talleyrand presented the draft of a decree proposing the establishment of an unchangeable unit as a basis of the new metrical system. The decree had been framed in concert with Lagrange, Borda, Laplace,

Monge, and Condorcet. The draft declared that the Assembly adopted the fourth part of a degree of the meridian as the base of the new system of measures, and that the operations necessary to determine this base, should be immediately executed. The decree was accepted, and the work was afterwards duly carried out.

CHAPTER LXXIII

LET BROTHERLY LOVE

THE month of July was the captain-jewel in the carcanet of 1790. It was now a year since the Bastille was destroyed, and who could deny that the anniversary of that day was or should seem an occasion for great rejoicing? On June 5 a deputation of the representatives of the Commune of Paris, introduced by Bailly, read an address from the citizens of Paris to all men in France, inviting them to celebrate July 14 at Paris. The deputation prayed that the committee on the constitution would determine the number of deputies which should be sent from each department to assist at the grand federation of the 14th. The Assembly took four days to decide that six men out of every two hundred should be elected by the districts to represent the rest. When the distance was above one hundred leagues from the capital, they might elect one from every four hundred. The expenses were to be defrayed by the districts. The troops of the line and the royal navy were also to send deputies. It was obvious to the organisers of the festival that the Golden Age had returned. Even if the Revolution

had known its baptism of blood, the bloodshed had proved salutary, had cleaned and quickened France. In any case, all that was over and done with. The era of peace had dawned, and the first business of every good and true citizen was to do honour to the birthday of the fall of the Bastille.

The conquerors of the Bastille were this day introduced at the bar of the Assembly. The committee of pensions had taken some pains to ascertain the names of the real conquerors of the Bastille ; and they had called for the appointment of commissioners to determine to whom belonged the honour of the victory. It was proposed that all the conquerors should have a uniform and complete equipment ; and on the barrel of the gun and on the sword-blade there should be the inscription recording that it was given by the nation to a conqueror of the Bastille. They were also to have an honourable brevet, expressive of the gratitude of the nation ; and the same was to be given to the widows of those who fell. On the occasion of the federation of July 14, a place was to be assigned to them in which France could contemplate at leisure the first conquerors of liberty. It is said, however, that the conquerors of the Bastille renounced these extraordinary honours on account of the irritation which they excited in the National and French Guards. One may imagine from what Rossignol says that perhaps a certain difficulty in proving oneself a veritable conqueror of the Bastille might count for something in this modesty.

The Assembly was invited to extend its hospitality to visitors even more remarkable than the conquerors of the Bastille. The Revolution had found no more extraordinary adherent than the Prussian Baron, Jean Baptiste Cloutz, who lives in history as Anacharsis Cloutz. Of the many whose heads were too weak for the strong wine of the Revolution, Cloutz was perhaps the weakest. He was not without wit. He was not without learning. He had travelled much, read much, written a little. He was a man of means sprung from a family of breeding. It was his privilege to have enjoyed for a time the acquaintanceship, if not the friendship, of Edmund Burke. It was his mania to regard himself as the personal enemy of the Founder of the Christian faith. He was always an enthusiast, almost always a fool, but never, as it would seem, a knave. The Revolution had quite unhinged his mind. The weakness of his wit moved him to some very ludicrous fantasies. The most ludicrous of these was the amazing comedy of which the National Assembly was made a witness. It is probable that Cloutz acted in all good faith. He solicited the privilege of introducing a deputation to the National Assembly. He desired to bring to that bar, which had been the scene of so many grotesque and theatrical displays, delegates from the whole human race to express their approval of the doctrines of the Revolution and their admiration of the National Assembly. The National Assembly, whatever its

gifts, had unhappily no sense whatever of the ridiculous. It was the willing sport of any adventurer. Anacharsis Clootz received the desired permission. The President announced to a readily impressed audience that the deputation was going to appear. The deputation did appear. It was a deputation from the whole or almost the whole of the human race—English, Prussians, Sicilians, Hollanders, Russians, Poles, Germans, Swedes, Italians, Spaniards, Brabançons, Liégois, Avignonais, Swiss, Genevese, Indians, Arabs, and Chaldæans—an amazing mob. Anacharsis Clootz, bubbling with a wild enthusiasm, spoke in the name of all. He said that a number of strangers belonging to all the countries on the earth asked permission to take their place in the Field of Mars on the 14th, where the Cap of Liberty, which they would enthusiastically raise, should be the pledge of the approaching liberty of their wretched fellow-citizens. The President, Menou, replied that the Assembly would allow them to be present on one condition—that when they returned home they would tell their fellow-citizens what they had seen. A Turk, or a man who represented a Turk, attempted to speak, but he spoke French so ill that his speech was unreported. These scenes, says a grave admirer, which appear ridiculous to those who have not witnessed them, excited a deep emotion in those who were present. It would be very hard not to regard this scene as ridiculous if we believed

with many that the deputation was as preposterous as a travelling circus ; that its Turks and its Chaldæans were but as stage supernumeraries hired at so much an hour and muffled in absurd costumes.

But the burlesque was eminently successful. The bombast of Clootz, and the tawdry appearance of the representatives of the human race, kindled the enthusiasm of the Assembly ; and Alexander Lameth spoke. There were four figures representing four provinces, which were chained like the statues of tributary people at the feet of the statue of Louis XIV. at the Place des Victoires. The deputies of these four provinces had always been considered in the Assembly as among the firmest supporters of the rights of the nation. It was not fit that when the deputies from all parts of France should meet to swear the constitution, they should be reminded of humiliation and servitude. He moved that these four figures should be taken away, but he afterwards extended his motion to the destruction of all the emblems of servitude, such as those at the feet of the statue of Louis XIV., and to the substitution of others which should commemorate the principal events of the happy Revolution. This motion was carried.

A kind of delirium akin to that of August 4 seized upon the Assembly after the decision of the great festival of fraternity. There was not much left for them to abolish, but they felt that they must abolish something in honour of the occasion.

A happy inspiration suggested to somebody that nobles still had titles, still bore coat armour. In a moment it was resolved to abolish the hereditary nobility in France, and all the long list of titles which were enumerated in the decree. It was forbidden to let domestics wear liveries, or to have armorial bearings ; but the decree did not extend to foreigners in France. Lafayette persistently supported the abolition of titles, which converted him into a plain *Sieur Mortier*. A *Montmorency* spoke for the abolition. Maury, said to be the son of a shoemaker, spoke against it, and he urged some arguments of weight, but he lost what advantage he had gained when he went as far back as *Cæsar's Commentaries* and the ancient chieftains of Gaul. *Mirabeau* does not seem to have spoken. It is probable that he, as a sensible man, would have preferred keeping the title he was known by, though he had once in a fine frenzy said that he would give it to anybody who would have it. His mind could only be vexed by a kind of legislation which was little better than child's play—the legislation which believed that the changing of names meant the changing of things—the legislation which believed that it had benefited the human race when it had puzzled all Europe by travestying Count *Mirabeau* into the citizen *Riquetti*. *Mirabeau* had the least imaginable sympathy for government by pedants of any kind.

History is rich in ceremonials intended to

inaugurate the reign of peace and destined to prove the prelude of war and the herald of hate. It affords no more memorable instance than that of the federation of July 14, 1790, with its rapturous celebration of the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, its rapturous salutation of the dawn of the era of brotherly love. From all the four corners of France the enthusiasts of the new order streamed in their thousands towards the Field of Mars. The whole nation was to be represented by delegation. On the evening of the great day there were one hundred thousand representatives of the popular principles in Paris, all eager to swear devotion to the constitution, all eager to play their part in regenerating France, in regenerating the world.

It might well have seemed a costly, a difficult, even a dangerous enterprise to bring so vast a body of men to a common centre. But what was cost, difficulty, or danger to the enthusiasm of the hour? The question of cost was easily answered. The expenses of those who were chosen to represent their less fortunate fellow-citizens in Paris were to be defrayed by the localities. Many of these were poor, but contributions were raised and the deputies were equipped as best they could, though many were compelled, to their disappointment, to come without uniforms. They were lodged and entertained on the road—National Guards, soldiers, sailors—like pilgrims on their way to the national shrine, relieving the weariness of the way by song.

A picturesque writer has given a picturesque description of the pilgrimage. From a surface of four times the area of England, from countries varying as much in natural character, and the habits and occupation of the people, as the parts of Europe most remote from one another, but all impelled by one common feeling of nationality, thousands of weary, dusty travellers made their way to Paris under a burning July sun. Some were pilgrims from the foot of the Alps crowned with everlasting snow. Some were from the heats of the south, and the shores of the midland sea. Some were from the valleys of the Pyrenees, and the rocks of the Cevennes and Auvergne. Some were from the low and dreary Landes, lashed by the Atlantic; and from the iron-bound coast of Brittany, which projects its granite forehead into the ocean, frowning and frowned upon by another Britain. Some were from the valley of the Rhone, where ancient Rome had left imperishable monuments, and from which modern Rome had just been expelled. Some were from the vine-clad hills of the Garonne, the spaces of the Loire, and the regal waters of the Seine. Some were from the forests of the Ardennes, and the plains of Picardy and Artois, where the natural boundary between nations is obliterated in the great plain of Northern Europe.

Paris was of more than one mind about its welcome of all these pilgrims tramping to the capital from all the ends of France and humming their

snatches of song to cheer their minds and lend new alacrity to their footsore bodies. The cautious feared for plunder, the timid talked of murder. Royalists and revolutionaries alike had their fears, though their fears were different. The royalists resented the return of an exile from overseas, the return of the Duke of Orleans, who had come back from England and had ostentatiously taken the civic oath before the Assembly. The more ardent revolutionaries, the extremists of the Jacobin Club, dreaded lest all this enthusiasm for federation, all this rallying of representatives, might lend a new lease of popularity to the King. Such were the dangers that different men foresaw. Such as they were they had to be faced. So had the difficulties of the enterprise, and these were faced and overcome.

One of the greatest difficulties was in connection with the destined scene of the celebration. It had been decided that the festival of July 14 should take place in the Field of Mars. There was much to do to get the place ready. The ground was prepared by moving the earth from the middle, and piling it up on the sides, so as to make an immense amphitheatre. Twelve thousand men were employed at this labour, but they worked too slowly for the impatience of the Parisians, and there was some risk that the ground would not be ready in time. Somebody suggested that many hands make light work and that those

who want a thing done had best do it themselves. The Parisians took the hint. They set to work themselves, rich and poor, priests, soldiers, men of all classes, women of all sorts and conditions, good and bad, young and old, plain and pretty. They came in sections, with drums and banners, spades and barrows. When the signal was given, they returned to their homes singing by the light of torches. Even workmen came to help after a day of weary labour. The Revolutionary journals glowed with praises of the zeal, the devotion, and the earnestness of the patriots, men and women. Between the 7th and the 14th the work was ended. A plain was made into a valley bounded by two hills. The scene was set for the playing of the great play.

The enthusiasm that had accomplished this remarkable piece of spade work was no less lively in its welcome of those for whom the work had been done. The hands that were galled with the pick and blistered with the spade were eagerly extended to grasp the hand of those who came tramping into Paris. Shelter was found for everybody. Private persons took pleasure and pride in throwing their houses open to many of the delegates. For the others who had to look after their own billet the keepers of inns and the keepers of lodging-houses lowered their prices. To be a deputy for the great Federation was to deserve and to receive all attention.

At last the great day dawned. Somebody has written of the malignity of inanimate things. At least the elements have their ironies, and it should surprise no one to learn that on the day of the celebration the rain fell in torrents. It rained as if it had never stopped raining since the deluge. It rained as if it had never rained before. It rained as if it never meant to stop raining. The rain turned the grassy amphitheatre of the Field of Mars into a morass. It drenched with its pitiless severity the brave uniforms. It dragged the gay banners, battered the flowers, soaked men and women to the skin. But the Parisians and the provincials were determined to rejoice, and they did rejoice, in defiance of the weather. The Federates, ranged under the banners presented to them by the Municipality of Paris, banners of the eighty-three departments from which they came, marched on the morning of the 14th from the site of the Bastille, escorted by troops of the line, sailors from the Royal Navy, and National Guards, through the densest crowds to the Field of Mars. Many gave them wine and food on the march ; everyone applauded them. Lafayette, on the familiar white horse, made himself conspicuous, the hero of a day of heroes. The amazing procession was joined at the Place Louis Quinze by the deputies of the National Assembly. In due course it arrived at its destination.

Since six in the morning above three hundred

thousand men and women from Paris and its neighbourhood had taken their places on the grass seats formed round the amphitheatre in the Field of Mars. All were wet and muddy, but all made merry while they waited for the Federates and the Assembly. When the whole procession was assembled in the Field of Mars, the Bishop of Autun celebrated mass at an altar formed in the style of ancient construction, and placed in the centre of the amphitheatre. Three hundred priests in white surplices and broad tricolor sashes stood at the four corners of the altar. An awning ornamented with fleurs de lis was placed in front of the military school for the King and the Court. On the right of the royal throne was the seat of the President of the Assembly, without any person between him and the King. On the left of the King and on the right of the President were the deputies. Mirabeau was ambitious of filling the chair of the President on this occasion, for a new president was chosen every fourteen days, but Lafayette opposed his wishes, and the Marquis de Bonnay, a colourless, exemplary man, was accorded the honour that Mirabeau had deigned to desire.

When the mass was ended, the Bishop of Autun blessed the oriflamme, or national standard of France, and the banners of the eighty-three departments, and then gave out the Te Deum, which was executed by twelve hundred musicians. Lafayette at the head of the staff of the Paris militia

and the deputies from the land and sea forces now ascended the altar and swore in the name of the troops and of the Federates to be faithful to the nation, the law, and the King. The President of the National Assembly, standing before his seat, took the same oath, and the deputies and the people followed with the words, 'I swear it.' The King then, standing in front of his throne, in an audible voice said, 'I, King of the French, swear to the nation to employ all the power which is delegated to me by the constitutional law of the State, to maintain the constitution decreed by the National Assembly and accepted by me, and to cause the laws to be executed.' The Queen took the Dauphin in her arms, and, presenting him to the people, said, amidst a rapture of applause, that her son too shared in the popular ceremony.

On a sudden the weather changed. The rain ceased, the sky cleared, the sun shone. The spirits that had been gay in the gloom grew gayer with the change. The great ceremony was over, but there was still much to do—much singing, much dancing, much eating and drinking. Paris was a blaze of illuminations, the sky streamed with fireworks. On the site of the Bastille a huge placard announced that people might dance there. People did dance there with a will all through the summer night.

The general festivity was not limited to the one day. While the Federates stayed in Paris there

was feasting and dancing every day. The Field of Mars was the centre of amusement. Lafayette reviewed there a part of the National Guard of the departments, and of the troops of the line. The King, the Queen, and the Dauphin were present, and were received with shouts of joy. The Federates, before leaving Paris, paid their respects to the King, to whom they testified the strongest attachment. The commander of the Bretons bent one knee to the earth, and, presenting his sword, swore that it should never be stained but with the blood of his enemies. Louis raised the Breton from the ground, and returned his sword, assuring him that the weapon could never be in better hands than in those of his dear Bretons, whose affection and fidelity he had never doubted, and repeating that he was the father, the brother, the friend of all the French.

So began and so practically ended the epoch of brotherly love, the reign of Peace. The proof that there was still plenty of loyalty to the King in France exasperated the extremer Revolutionaries. Marat raged at the tameness of the people, at the sight of a King receiving honours on a throne while the President of its representatives only occupied a mean seat. Desmoulins derided Capet the Elder, as he was pleased to call the King, and asserted that his throne ought to have been left empty to represent the sovereignty of the nation. Malouet denounced both Camille Desmoulins and Marat in

the National Assembly. He declared that there were no more cruel enemies to the constitution than those writers and speakers who designed to make the King and royalty an object of contempt and scandal, who seized on the occasion of a memorable festival, during which the King received from all parts of the kingdom testimonials of love and fidelity, to speak of the insolence of the throne, of the slight to the executive power. He read a passage in which Camille Desmoulins called the triumph of Paulus Æmilius a national festival, because a king with his hands tied behind his back followed in humiliation the triumphal car. Malouet then read some passages from Marat's pamphlet entitled 'C'en est fait de nous.' One of these ran thus: 'Citizens of every age and of every rank, the measures taken by the Assembly cannot prevent you from perishing ; it is all over with you for ever if you do not run to arms, if you do not resume the heroic valour which on July 14 and October 5 saved France twice. Fly to Saint-Cloud if there is yet time, bring back the King and the Dauphin within our walls, keep them safe, and let them answer for events ; shut up the Austrian woman and her brother-in-law, that they may no longer conspire ; seize all the ministers and their clerks ; put them in irons. Five or six hundred heads taken off would have secured you repose, liberty, and happiness ; a false humanity has checked your arms and suspended your blows ; it will cost the lives of millions

of your brothers.' Malouet carried his demand for prosecution of such writings. Notwithstanding the opposition of the Left, it was decreed that the Procureur du Roi should prosecute, for treason against the nation, the authors, printers, and hawkers of publications which excited the people to insurrection against the law, to the effusion of blood, and the overthrow of the constitution. But on August 2, on the motion of Pétion, which was supported by Alexander Lameth, the Assembly decreed that there should be no prosecution for anything published up to that time; but that the National Assembly should instruct the committees on the constitution and on criminal law, to present to it a plan for the execution of the decree of July 31. Camus, however, carried an amendment, by which the paper '*C'en est fait de nous*' was excepted from the general amnesty.

The great Federation had proclaimed a peace where there was no peace. Violence still raged, castles still blazed in the provinces. Tenants still refused to pay rent or tithes, and continued to interpret August 4 after their own fashion. Vainly did the Assembly ask the King to decree that the Courts of Justice should prosecute all persons defying the rights of property. Pronouncements in defence of the sacred rights of property did not perhaps seem to come with any special earnestness from the National Assembly. They were daffed aside unheeded. Decrees were futile without force behind

them, and force was not at hand. If the army as a whole had been lost to the Royal cause, it had not been gained to the Revolution. It was rotten with insubordination; a house divided; officers scorning their half or wholly mutinous soldiery; soldiers hating and envying their officers.

The superior officers hated the Revolution, because it had opened promotion to merit, and left the higher grades no longer the exclusive possession of birth and favour. They had taken the civic oath slowly and unwillingly, and many of them had emigrated. The soldiers were naturally in favour of a change which altered their condition and gave every man the hope of promotion. But besides this motive for attachment to the Revolution, there was dislike of the strict discipline to which the officers, generally of the counter-revolutionary party, subjected them, and perhaps the hope of better pay. Bouillé, who had full powers from Latour-du-Pin, Minister of War, did all that he could to prevent his troops from being carried away by the revolutionary spirit and to maintain discipline. But the attempt seemed well-nigh hopeless in the face of a new condition of things that sapped all the old discipline of the army and had not yet created a new discipline. We learn something of the condition of the army at this time from one who was intimately concerned with it, and peculiarly qualified for forming an impartial opinion. The 'Memoirs of the Chevalier de Mautort,' which were

published in the early part of 1895, contribute, unfortunately, very little indeed to the history of the Revolution. Indeed, Mautort makes it his boast that he will say very little about the Revolution, and that little only in so far as directly concerns himself. He kept his word religiously, and in consequence there are only a few of the many pages of his memoirs which make any contribution to our knowledge of the period. Yet those few pages have their interest and their value, if only as giving the mental state and the attitude of a gallant, honourable, and not too intelligent man of the sword during a great political crisis. He has placed on record his own indignation at the way in which the principles of the Revolution were instilled into the troops, and the means employed by the National Assembly to gain authority over the army. He was in garrison at Briançon when the Revolution broke out, and he congratulates himself on an isolation from the centre of insurrection, which allowed his regiment to preserve a condition of discipline and good order. But it was not easy, even at this distance from the capital, to preserve what he regarded as the integrity of the troops with whom he was associated. Every post, he declares, brought with it big batches of incendiary addresses, and all this 'printed filth'—for so he terms it—was sent to the inferior officers and to the soldiers, to whom it preached the agreeable doctrine of revolution with impunity. For a considerable time the

heads of the regiment found means of delaying the circulation of these addresses by annexing them at the post office before they were distributed. But after a while other soldiers returning from absence on leave brought with them, even to the quiet and isolation of Briançon, news of all the doings in the interior of France, and from that moment, as Mautort disconsolately confesses, it required a far stricter watchfulness to hinder the propagation of the new ideas.

After a while Mautort was sent with his battalion to Montluel, three leagues from Lyon, where he tells that he preserved discipline with a gentle firmness. Here he was troubled by the visits of emissaries, both from the Jacobites and from the Royalists. The first he had watched as dangerous folk; he took no notice whatever of the second. But it was not until the early part of 1791, when the regiment was removed to Besançon, that he found himself most at odds with the revolutionary forces. Besançon, a handsome and of old time a joyous garrison town, was gravely agitated by the new spirit. The wealthier inhabitants had either withdrawn to their country houses or were living in retirement. 'The people,' says Mautort, 'always people, cried, "Long live the Nation!" and were in abject misery. The watchwords of Liberty and Equality, which were the watchwords of agitators, were the tools of the Sans-Culottes and the Jacobins in their attempts to persuade idiots that they were

about to be free and that in a little while all Frenchmen would be equals.' It is not surprising that an officer of these opinions was unable to take pride or pleasure in his station at Besançon, where, as he plaintively expresses it, all those who had any common sense left, suffered chiefly from their powerlessness to guide aright these misdirected spirits without being signalled out as anti-revolutionary, and exposed to the fury of the populace. Those in command had the greatest difficulty to keep their soldiers from openly taking sides with the democratic party. In the clubs which were presided over by Jacobins of the extremest order many of the inferior officers were members, and took part in the passing of resolutions which were, according to Mautort, of the most incendiary kind and subversive of all good order. 'All the clubs of the large towns were affiliated to that of Paris, which had its bureaus and its officials whom it sent into the provinces to interpret the intentions of the Mirabeaus, the Chapeliers, the Barnaves, and the other coryphées of the Revolution. In matters of great importance these gentlemen did not hesitate to send couriers at great expense to their provincial colleagues. Thus, almost invariably, the remarkable events in Paris were known in distant towns actually before the arrival of the post.'

But the great grief of Mautort as a military man was the way in which the Assembly presumed to interfere with military men. He raged at

what he considered as the device of the Assembly to alienate the troops by the decree which conferred upon subaltern officers the vacant places of their superior officers. Officers of the standing of Mautort, of the temperament of Mautort, were convinced that every snare would be spread, every offensive means employed, to compel the officers who were suspected of adhesion to the principles of the old order to resign their commissions and leave their places vacant for more zealous revolutionary intriguing sergeants. There was not a soldier of fortune who did not seem himself in the position held, and as he was now taught to believe unjustly held, by his superior officer. It was obvious in such a condition of things that disaffection from being passive must become active; that in the general upheaval the army would not escape. The question of a soldier's duty is one that a civilian should always be diffident of approaching with any positive spirit. 'It has been held,' says Alison, 'that the first duty of soldiers is to adhere with implicit devotion to that fidelity which is the foundation of military duties. Treason to his colours has been considered as foul a blot on the soldier's scutcheon as cowardice in the field.' He proceeds to lament that these generous feelings, common alike to republican antiquity and modern chivalry, have disappeared during the fumes of the French Revolution. According to the doctrines of the Revolution, as interpreted by Alison, the soldier who was honoured was not he who kept but he who

violated his oath; the rewards of valour were showered not upon those who defended, but those who overturned the government; and the incense of popular applause was offered at the shrine not of fidelity, but of treason. It does seem certain that an army cannot exist without fidelity, but it seems also certain that the means to secure fidelity were wanting in the French army when the Revolution began. The first, the most fatal, difficulty was the arrears of pay. It might be maintained that the soldier's oath of fidelity is given under certain conditions and that those conditions were not kept. It was the question of money which led to the first outbreak on the Eastern frontier, at Metz.

At Metz Bouillé was in command, François Claude Amour, Marquis de Bouillé, a gallant, experienced soldier, fifty years of age. It was well known of him, or at least well believed of him, that he was a loyal King's man, who placed the King's service next to the fear of God in his confession of faith. Lafayette had tried to conciliate him, had visited him in Metz, and made it plain enough that he prized his friendship. But Lafayette's advances were not met half way. Lafayette's proffers of alliance were not returned. Bouillé, the stout soldier, had nothing in common with Cromwell-Grandison, with the semi-mutineer who was a little for the King but a great deal for himself, with the falling idol of the Paris mob, with the leader of the National Guard. To Bouillé's mind a soldier was a soldier and not a

politician, and he would have none of Lafayette. A greater and a stronger man than Lafayette admired and appreciated Bouillé. Mirabeau believed not merely in his loyalty to the King, but in his ability to help the King if the King should come to need help. The thoughts of the Queen, if not the thoughts of the King, no doubt turned from what threatened to prove captivity to the governor of Metz, whose word was his bond and whose sword was his King's. But in the proportion that Bouillé was admired by a Moderate like Lafayette, by a statesman like Mirabeau, by a captive like the Queen, so he was distrusted, if not disliked, by the men who rallied round the Jacobin Club, whose hatred of royalty, whose disdain of moderation, and whose distrust of statesmanship daily grew apace.

Bouillé went his way, heedless apparently of praise or blame, doggedly determined, as it would appear, to do what he conceived to be his soldier's duty, whatever came of it. He had taken the oath to the Constitution, as so many other Royalists had done, from the Prince de Conti downwards. He had seen his unpopularity in Metz change to popularity. He had been offered and had declined to accept the command of the National Guard in Metz. The hour had now come when he was to face greater trials than he had known in all his life of fighting, from the Seven Years' War to the War of Independence. The spirit of mutiny was abroad, and Bouillé was not the man to make any pact with mutiny.

At Metz, as in many other places, the soldiers complained that they were robbed by the officers, who gave no account of the regimental chest. Whether the money destined for the regiments was improperly applied or not, the fact of all the accounts being carelessly kept was sufficient to excite suspicion. In February 1790 the Assembly had raised the pay of the soldier a trifle, but it was complained that the soldiers, so late as the month of May, had derived no advantage from the decree of the Assembly. Bouillé himself was in some danger at Metz, where the Picardy regiment, where the Salm-Salm regiment broke into revolt, and where for a time it seemed as if there was only Bouillé's body to ward off mutiny, and only Bouillé's bare sword to defend his body. After a while Salm-Salm was pacified by payment, but by payment made under somewhat curious conditions. The colonel of the regiment of Condé, in a letter to the Minister of War, wrote that the twenty-two thousand livres unjustly demanded of Bouillé had been paid by the officers to save Bouillé's life. This seemed serious enough. It implied a fatal cleavage between the leaders and the led. But for all its seriousness it proved but trivial in comparison with the graver troubles which came to a head at Nancy, and which gave to the men of the Revolution their first experience of the curse of civil war.

It is a long and an ugly story. April 19, 1790, the day of the federation of Lorraine at Mont

Sainte-Geneviève, near Nancy, marks the date at which the divisions between the soldiers and the officers of the King's Regiment began. The officers could scarcely doubt that the soldiers sympathised with the new movement. They are accused of endeavouring to excite jealousy between them and the other troops and the National Guard. It was said that some of the officers at Metz employed a fencing-master belonging to the regiment, and that this man in his time played many parts. On one day he would wear his military dress and insult the National Guards. On another day he would assume the national dress and insult the soldiers who did not know him. The results of these masquerades were quarrels, were duels in which this terrible and somewhat legendary fencing-master won the game. At last he was arrested. It was discovered that in his own country—Cocaigne, Cloud-Cuckoo-Town or elsewhere—he had been condemned to be hanged. He was driven from Nancy with ignominy; while the officers whom he named as his instigators fled across the frontier to join the Austrians. Whether the tale were true or false, it was good enough for the enemies of the old order to believe. It is possible that the idea of provoking duels occurred to both sides as an ingenious means of purifying the army. In any case quarrels were incessant, and in the beginning of August there were at Nancy all the elements of disturbance.

The garrison included the Regiment of the

King, the cavalry regiment Mestres-de-Camp, and Château-Vieux, a Swiss regiment. On August 6 a decree was submitted to the Assembly by Emmery, who acted at the instigation of Lafayette. The decree declared that, in order to examine the accounts which were kept by the officers, the King would name inspectors from among the officers; that no ignominious discharge should be given to the soldiers except after a sentence passed in the old form; and that soldiers might complain directly to the King or to the National Assembly of their grievances. Before this decree had been accepted, before it had been heard of, the soldiers of the King's Regiment had asked for and obtained a statement of the regimental accounts. Fired by this example, two soldiers of the Swiss regiment of Château-Vieux came to the King's Regiment on August 5, to ask for information about the way of examining the accounts. For doing this they were whipped on parade by the order of their officers, while some of the French officers looked on and expressed approbation of the punishment. Château-Vieux was the regiment that had defied and baffled Besenval in the Field of Mars on July 14, 1789. It was accordingly popular with the French soldiers, who took the two Swiss, put their own caps on their heads, marched them through the town, and made the Swiss commandant pay each of them a hundred louis by way of compensation for their punishment. In the meantime the decree of

August 6, which had been sanctioned by the King on the 7th, arrived and was read to the assembled garrison. The decree was not the only fuel added to the flame of discontent at Nancy.

A report was spread that the officers intended to cross the frontiers with the military chest and the colours of the King's Regiment. The soldiers of the King's Regiment compelled their commander to give up the chest. The example was contagious. The Swiss lost no time in seizing theirs. Authority in Paris, perplexed and indignant, saw that this state of things would not do, but was at a loss for the prompt and perfect remedy. As early as August 8 Lafayette by letter advised Bouillé to put a stop somehow or other to the disorders at Nancy. The soldiers on their side sent an address to the Assembly, but it was intercepted; and some messengers who reached Paris with a second letter were arrested by Lafayette. On August 16 the Assembly, informed from many quarters of the state of Nancy, unanimously passed a decree which declared that the violation of the decrees of the Assembly, sanctioned by the King, was treason against the State, and that those who had excited the garrison of Nancy to revolt should be tried and punished. Those who had taken any part in the mutiny were allowed twenty-four hours after the publication of the decree in which to express their penitence, that penitence to be formally expressed in writing if their officers wished it.

The instrument chosen for carrying out these stern resolutions was not the happiest that fate could have put into the hands of a perplexed National Assembly. The instrument was the Chevalier Guiot de Malseigne, a general officer who was summoned for the purpose from Besançon. Guiot de Malseigne was a man of iron purpose and desperate courage. It was told of him that when he was a colonel of carabineers he fell into a fierce quarrel with a comrade. Straightway de Malseigne locked the door, drew, and forced his adversary to draw. After a sharp passage of arms de Malseigne's antagonist ran the Chevalier through the body and pinned him to the door of his room. Guiot de Malseigne coolly observed that retreat would now be difficult, and the moment his antagonist withdrew his sword de Malseigne pierced him to the heart and stretched him dead on the floor. Then de Malseigne opened the door and, wounded as he was, surrendered himself to the military authorities, who tried and acquitted him. In the first brisk days of provincial insurrection it is recorded of him, or of one who bore his name, that on an occasion when an insurgent peasantry were very like to make a tumult in the house of God with a view to overawing their old-time master, de Malseigne overawed them instead by solemnly drawing his sword and asking, in a voice of loud devotion, Heaven to pardon him for the blood he was about to shed. No blood was shed; the voice of loud devotion carried the day. It had yet to try to carry

the day on well-nigh precisely the same terms at Nancy.

Guiot de Malseigne was every inch a soldier of the old uncompromising kind. It was his view—and a fine old-fashioned view quite out of keeping with the theories of 1789—that where he was in authority his word was law and had to be obeyed. He had no idea of conciliation, no thought of tactful manipulation. Mutiny was mutiny, and a mutineer a mutineer to him. He could no more temporise with the one than he could condone the other. The very man for the moment when words came to blows, he was the very worst man possible for any kind of consultation whose aim was to prevent words from ever coming to blows. His view of life was simple. He was a soldier; he obeyed the orders of those placed above him; he expected the soldiers whom it had pleased fortune to place below him to obey his orders as devoutly, as immediately, and as unquestioningly. It would have been difficult to find a worse man to send to Nancy at such a crisis if the purpose in hand were to avoid strife. It would have been difficult to find a better if the purpose in hand were to set fire as promptly as might be to a most astonishing medley of inflammable materials. M. de Malseigne, in his best barrack-room manner, lost no time in setting fire to the materials accumulated in Nancy.

The result was what might have been expected. The Chevalier de Malseigne, stout soldier and

staunch royalist, could not understand and would listen to no nonsense about soldiers' grievances. To the prevailing hot temper his hot temper added the final touch. Guiot de Malseigne was heroic; but what was one against so many? He plucked out his sword as such a stout gentleman should. The history of de Malseigne's campaign reads like a page from one of the novels of Dumas, if not like a page from the 'Iliad.' But his good sword was of no use to him; he was but one man against a multitude; he found himself a prisoner where he had come to domineer. He managed, gallantly and desperately, to escape from Nancy, to ride, as for his life and hotly pursued, to Lunéville, where there were carabineers believed to be loyal. At Lunéville, however, he was given up to his pursuers, managed to escape again, rode back to the carabineers believed to be loyal, was again given up by them to his pursuers, and was carried back in triumph to Nancy and flung into prison together with Commander de Noue. Insurrection was having everything its own way at Nancy so far.

But only so far. News of the crisis in Nancy travelled swiftly to Metz, to Bouillé, as it also travelled in due time as swiftly as possible to Paris and the National Assembly. Never since the military history of the world began was there found in it a man less likely to trifle with or to temporise with military insubordination than Bouillé. The one clear thought now in his mind was that there

was not room enough on the surface of the earth for Bouillé and for Nancy mutineers. He had, though he would not have greatly cared if he had lacked it, the support of the National Assembly. It had decided that commissioners were to be sent to the soldiers—in partial anticipation of later Representatives of the People—and it was not prepared to permit its mandatories to be insulted, defied, flung into prison. In any case, Bouillé's mind was made up. His own rebellious Salm-Salm was now no longer rebellious. It had practically said at Metz what Château-Vieux had said at Nancy, that so long as its leaders were prepared to pay its arrears, it would follow its leaders to the world's end. Bouillé only asked it to follow him as far as Metz, and to Metz it was ready and even eager to go. Bouillé sent his peremptory message to Nancy, calling for the immediate liberation of the captives de Malseigne and de Noue, calling also upon the Swiss regiment immediately to evacuate Nancy. The Swiss refused. Bouillé marched upon the town with 2,200 infantry and 1,400 horse, nearly all Germans, and about 700 National Guards. But the mass of the National Guards would not join him, and they threw themselves into Nancy. On the 31st Bouillé was close to Nancy. He received a deputation from the municipality and the garrison. He demanded that the garrison should leave the city, and that de Noue and de Malseigne, who were now prisoners in the place,

should be set at liberty. As he approached nearer, he received a second deputation. This surrendered to him de Malseigne and de Noue, both alive and well, and assured him that the soldiers were leaving the town. In fact, the two French regiments were leaving by all the gates except one, which was fortified and guarded by the Swiss and some soldiers of the other regiments.

Unhappily, the terms acceded to by the municipality had not apparently been understood by the Swiss and the others at the yet unopened gate. They still seem to have believed that it was their business to resist Bouillé to the death. They accordingly prepared to open fire upon him and his following at the very moment when everything seemed to be peaceably arranged. A brave lieutenant of the King's Regiment, the young Chevalier Desilles, flung himself in vain before the mouth of the cannon levelled by the Swiss. Even while he was protesting against their act he was shot down, hurled aside, and the cannon opened its fire with fatal effect upon Bouillé's soldiers, killing more than half a hundred men. After that there was no more talk of pacification for Bouillé, or for Bouillé's infuriated troops. Bouillé and his following stormed the gate, fought their way inch by inch, fighting desperately and with heavy loss, to the heart of Nancy. The furious battle lasted three hours. At last the soldiers of Château-Vieux, being either killed, wounded, or made prisoners, and Mestre-

de-Camp having fled, the King's Regiment, which took no part in the contest, surrendered. On the following day order was restored. Bouillé reckoned his loss at three hundred killed. No peaceable citizen, he said, was molested. After the battle twenty-two Swiss were hanged, many were sent to the galleys, and the ringleader was broken on the wheel. Horrible stories were told of the excesses which were committed in Nancy, and the stories were believed then by those who wished to believe them. It is not necessary to believe them now. It was a bad business all round, bloodily begun and bloodily ended. To the end of time one set of thinkers will sympathise with the mutinous soldiers of Nancy, and another set applaud the stern resolution and the vigorous execution of Bouillé. It must at least be borne in mind that Bouillé's action met with the approval of whatever there was of constituted authority in France at that hour. If Bouillé was a King's man, he was also a servant of the Constitution and of the National Assembly, and he had the approval of both King and National Assembly. The King thanked Bouillé for his vigorous conduct, and begged him to continue to act with the same vigour. He extended Bouillé's command from the borders of Switzerland to the Sambre. The Assembly passed votes of thanks, on the motion of Mirabeau, to the directory of La Meurthe, to the municipality of Nancy, and to the National Guards who acted under Bouillé. It declared that the general and the

troops of the line deserved warm approbation for the glorious discharge of their duty. Robespierre in vain attempted to get a hearing as an opponent of the action of the Assembly.

The affair at Nancy had two unexpected results. A few days after its conclusion, Loustalot, the editor of the '*Révolutions de Paris*,' the most successful of all the journals, died at the age of twenty-eight. His death was generally attributed to the effect produced by the news of the troubles at Nancy. Loustalot was a sincerely honest man, and he took the interests of his cause as much to heart as most people do their own. He feared that Bouillé's victory at Nancy would prove the herald of a series of successful royalist attempts to crush the Revolution by force. This fear seems to have hastened his end. He was a man of rare ability, and carried with him to the grave, after a short and brilliant career, a general testimony to the integrity of his aims.

The other unexpected result was, not the death of a public man but the end of a public life. The Jacobins and their allies raged in Paris over the conduct of Bouillé and of the Assembly. Among other expressions of their indignation, they tried without success to take by storm the house of the War Minister de Latour-du-Pin. Thereupon a colleague of the War Minister made up his mind that he had played his game and lost it, and that it was high time for him to leave Paris as

speedily and as quietly as he could. This defeated, baffled colleague was the once adored Necker.

Necker's credit had long been at an end. His health was impaired, and he yearned for quiet and retirement. On September 4 he communicated in a letter to the President of the Assembly his intention to resign. His letter bore the imprint of his consciousness of integrity and of his incurable vanity. Malebranche, said Mirabeau, sees all in God, Necker all in Necker. Necker had lent two million francs to the royal treasury, which he left without alarm under the protection of the nation. His resignation was accepted, and the National Assembly hardly took notice of his departure. Necker admits that a very slight encouragement from the Assembly would have made him stay. Lacking this, Necker, who had been the hero of the hour, the idol of the multitude, fled secretly and as if for his life from the capital. Once before when he rode away from the capital under other conditions his progress had been delayed. So it was now, but for very different reasons. He was arrested as a traitor at Arcis-sur-Aube. He ran for a time some considerable risk of the lantern. He was finally allowed to go his own way in peace by the duly consulted National Assembly. He went his own way in peace into a nothingness that lasted some years. He had done a good deal to bring about the Revolution, but the Revolution had outgrown him and had done with him, and flung him scornfully aside and forgot him.

The immediate cause of Necker's retirement was the state of the finances. At this time the Committee of Finance, intending to present a plan for the liquidation of the public debt, thought it proper to present first a full statement of the amount of the debt. The whole sum which had to be paid was, according to the report of the committee, the enormous amount of nearly two hundred thousand millions of livres. Necker had opposed the original formation of assignats, and he was against any further issue. Though the assignats carried interest at three per cent., payable at the end of the year, they were already depreciated in the departments from six to ten per cent. The debates on a further issue took place in September. Maury opposed the measure with his usual vigour. Talleyrand opposed it, pointing out the evil consequences that would follow from the further issue of these promises to pay. Mirabeau, though in his earlier writings he had called all paper money a walking pestilence, supported the proposal of a further issue, and supported it with arguments supplied, as it is said, by Clavière. Mirabeau won the day. The best thing Necker could do under the circumstances was to go, and he went.

Thus Mirabeau's course was rid of his 'charlatan,' and the world was free for Mirabeau to bustle in. He was more eager than ever to bustle in it to some purpose. He had not needed the military disturbances to see that the state of France was desperate.

But he had his remedy for the military disturbances as for everything else. His plan was simple, heroic, and excellent. He proposed to disband the now rotten, corrupt, and useless army and to form a new one. His advice was not taken. It is the misfortune of all the history of the early Revolution that the advice of Mirabeau was not taken. He gave it fully and frankly to everybody who would listen to him. If anybody had listened to him, much might have been spared to France.

CHAPTER LXXIV

MIRABEAU DOES HIS BEST

It was a great pity that the advice of Mirabeau was not taken on the reorganisation of the army. It was a great pity that the advice of Mirabeau was not taken on almost every occasion when it was proffered. It has not been unfairly said that the history of the French Revolution is the history of Mirabeau so long as the life of the one and the life of the other ran together. Mirabeau was the one supremely great man whose name is recorded in the history of the early Revolution. Another supremely great name has yet to be recorded when the Revolution was upon its wane. Between the name of Mirabeau and the name of Napoleon no name appears which could without a grossness of extravagance be saluted with the epithet of grandeur. The age reeks with the names of celebrities, but greatness can scarcely be accorded without an abuse of language to a Lafayette or a Danton, a Robespierre or a Marat, a Malouet or a Maury, to any republican or any royalist of them all. Mirabeau might have saved France, might have saved the throne, might have saved the Revolution. The

history of the years from 1789 to 1791 is the history of Mirabeau and of Mirabeau's endeavour to accomplish the triple task.

It was Mirabeau's misfortune that he was unable to act alone. He had to seek society in his business of salvation. Because, unhappily, France was blessed with only one Mirabeau, it was hard for him to find the suitable ally, the man to stand at his right hand or his left, and serve him with all his might. Mirabeau had only felt disgust or dissatisfaction with the various statesmen and leaders whom he had hitherto approached in his efforts to save the situation. Montmorin, Necker, Orleans, Lafayette, Monsieur—each of these had been offered the advantage of Mirabeau's advice, of Mirabeau's inspiration, either before or after the opening of the States-General. In each case Mirabeau's experiment had only resulted in disappointment to Mirabeau. Where his advice was not rejected with stupidity as in the case of Montmorin, or with fatuity, as in the case of Necker, or with suspicion, as in the case of Lafayette, it was accepted by unreliable instruments like Orleans and Monsieur, and accepted under conditions that made it come to nothing. If Mirabeau intrigued with Orleans, if Mirabeau intrigued with the Count de Provence, it was in each case with the hope, the desperate hope, that in his fellow-conspirator he might find a man intelligent enough to understand and strong enough to execute the schemes for the safety of France which

seethed in Mirabeau's brain. But men like Orleans and Provence were constitutionally incapable of understanding a man like Mirabeau. Thus Mirabeau, who wanted to save the monarchy because he believed and always had believed that the monarchy was essential to the safety of France, was driven in the end to hang his hopes upon the possibility of directly influencing the King. The difficulty was for Mirabeau to succeed in getting the ear of the King, but that difficulty was somewhat curiously overcome.

Destiny has its whimsical way of working out its ends, and chooses its instruments fantastically. It chose at this period a most singular instrument for the defence of the monarchy of France. History hardly records a vainer figure than that of the Count de la Marck, born a d'Arenburg, whose fortune it was to claim at once a familiarity with the Court and an acquaintanceship with Mirabeau. The Count de la Marck boasts, in the notes he left behind him, of his aristocratic tastes. He certainly was in every sense aristocratic. Born of an illustrious Austrian family, he was early translated to the French Court, if not wholly to French ways. He carried himself with a special eminence in his new surroundings. He was not merely an Austrian noble, but also, in virtue of certain dexterous arrangements, a grandee of Spain, and as such entitled to peculiar privileges and honours at the Court of France. For a large part of a life that was destined to be a long

life he had aimed at being, and had succeeded in being, the pattern of a polished highly-bred nobleman. He had stately views of his own about decorum, as became a grandee of Spain. He was shocked at Madame du Barry's ways and at the homage paid to her. De la Marck was a man of ideas of a somewhat formal, arid kind. He piqued himself upon being enlightened in an age when it was fashionable to be enlightened. He was arrogant in his negation of any arrogance in his own nature. He was, as it were, a belated philosopher in a belated school. He found it not unagreeable to affect and even to practise the virtues of philosophy at a time when the sands of philosophy were running somewhat rapidly through the glass. He was intelligent enough to be impressed by the genius of Mirabeau. He was also foolish enough and vain enough to regard himself as in a measure Mirabeau's equal in intelligence and Mirabeau's patron in politics. He took to himself a kind of fatuous credit for having discovered and, as it were, used Mirabeau. It was Mirabeau's misfortune that he had to use de la Marck. A great spender, a great liver, a great man of the world as well as a great world's man, Mirabeau was at his wit's end for money. He was so only because he had not the time to devote to the care of an estate which if cared for would have maintained him richly, not merely in his needs, though they were magnificent, but in his luxuries, which were more magnificent still. In this crisis of

Mirabeau's fortunes, when he seemed forced to choose between looking after himself or looking after France, a man like de la Marck, standing well with the Court, moneyed, urbane, sedulous in praise, affable in admiration, seemed to arrive in the very nick of time. De la Marck thought Mirabeau might be useful, and he was prodigal of promise. To do him justice, he was not niggardly of performance. While he made himself the go-between of Mirabeau and the Court, he had the wisdom and the grace to assure Mirabeau that if the money essential to free Mirabeau from his mountain of debts was not forthcoming from the Court, Mirabeau should never be permitted to feel the galling of its weight while de la Marck was by his side. If only for this de la Marck had his purpose and served his turn in life. De la Marck brought Mirabeau into touch with the King. He did better still, he brought Mirabeau into touch with the Queen. It was something to understand, it was something to make the Queen understand, that in the counsels of Mirabeau lay the hope of the monarchy.

It has been said with justice that if the student of the French Revolution wishes to understand the mighty mould in which the scattered materials which form the foundations of contemporary France were melted down, and finally hardened into a solid block, the career of Mirabeau must be followed day by day in the work of the National Assembly. So long as Mirabeau lived, the history of the French

Revolution is to a great degree the history of Mirabeau. So long as Mirabeau lived, the history of the Constituent Assembly was to a great degree his history. His genius devoted itself to the laborious conception of the long-desired Constitution which, so unceasingly interrupted and so unceasingly resumed, remains to-day, in spite of all its faults and failings, one of the charters of modern republicanism. During the slow process of creating the constitution, Mirabeau was always to the front, giving to every hour of every day the service of his reason, his wisdom, his impetuosity and his patience, urging with the one virtue and restraining with the other a body that was often sadly in need both of stimulus and of restraint. It has been said of him that in the midst of all those new men, those experimentalists in statecraft, he carried himself like the veteran of another and a wiser generation, experienced in politics, grown to full age in the habit and the inherited traditions of liberty. Mirabeau is too often thought of as the rhetorician who used his eloquence as a whip wherewith to scourge to extreme courses a reluctant Assembly. Yet as a matter of fact the part Mirabeau most often played and played to most advantage was the part of the moderator, the restrainer, the tranquilliser of intemperance. He governed the impatience of the theorists who were hot for voting the declaration of the rights of man before entering upon the consideration of the needed constitution. He argued that the statesman cannot

proceed with the rapidity of the philosopher ; that he does not give arms into the hands of the people without at the same time teaching them how to make use of the gift. He recognised with a kind of cordial irony that the bare declaration of the rights of man, applicable to all ages, to all peoples, to all the moral and geographical latitudes of the globe, was doubtless a great idea, doubtless a beautiful idea. But he suggested that before thinking with so much generosity of the possible code for other nationalities, it would be a good thing and a wise thing to agree upon, if not to fix the basis for, a code especially serviceable to the French nation. He warned his hearers that at every step they took towards a formalised declaration of the rights of man they would be surprised to find how easily the rights of man could be abused by the citizen. A great deal has been said against the unwisdom and extravagance of those zealots, philosophers, and philanthropists who believed that salvation for society lay in the pompous promulgation of the rights of man. But it has never been said so sanely, with better temper, graver discretion, or greater force than by the man who watched the whole business with a wisdom that belonged to the past and to the future no less than to the present, and who criticised contemporary events with something of the experience of the elder and something of the inspiration of the prophet.

It must be admitted that in working out his

will Mirabeau was condemned to work in dubious and evil ways. The frankness—if such a term may be used—or at least the completeness of the perfidy of the hour exercises a fascination over the student. It has its brilliancy, like summer lightning; like summer lightning it illuminates, spasmodically, men and things; like summer lightning, it is for the most part innocuous. For where everybody was busily engaged in deceiving everybody else, where advances of friendship were but the mask for a countermining, where lie answered unto lie, and cheat checkmated cheat, the conflicting forces were in a measure equalised and even nullified, and thus a universal treason left the political conditions much the same as if honour and probity and truth had been the gods rather than the idols of the publicists.

The greatest man in France was not the least in these ignoble deceptions. Mirabeau would make overtures to Necker and pretend to be dazzled by the effulgence of his genius, while, all the time, he was writing to a friend, of Necker, as ‘that charlatan.’ He would make overtures to Lafayette time and again, and all the while be despising and deriding his Cromwell-Grandison. He would plan to discredit him with the Court, while he was pretending to work with him shoulder to shoulder for the rescue of the monarchy. Mirabeau seems to have thought it no discredit to his character to play the double-face in this fashion. To do him justice, what he practised towards others he was quite willing to

assume, and quite prepared to assume that they would practise towards himself. There is one conspicuous, one flagrant proof of Mirabeau's attitude towards life and his contemporaries at this very time in the story. When, after much anticipation, negotiation, and agitation, he went to his first, and his last, interview with Marie Antoinette, he conducted himself craftily. He was so profoundly distrustful of the intentions of the sovereign to whom he was prepared to devote his genius, that he made a near kinsman accompany him and wait in his carriage. It was agreed that if Mirabeau did not reappear within a certain time the kinsman was to hurry back to Paris at the top of his speed and proclaim aloud, to the city and the world, the treachery of which the great tribune had been made the victim. One version of this story indeed goes so far as to say that the kinsman for greater surety disguised himself in the livery of a lackey, but this melodramatic addition is not needed to intensify the significance of the fact. Mirabeau, in the full flame of his zeal to save the monarchy, went to the Tuileries apparently with the conviction that he carried his life in his hand, that the fate of Struensee might very well be his fate, and that assassination or kidnapping awaited him, in all likelihood, at the hands of those for whose sake—or avowedly for whose sake—he was preparing to risk, not merely his life, but what he prized as dearly as his life, his popularity. It is quite possible, however, that the

theatrical element in Mirabeau's nature prompted him to profess an apprehension of these Venetian modes of dealing with a political antagonist which after all he did not feel very profoundly. It must have added, in his sardonic mind, to the joy of obedience to the royal summons, to think of that apprehensive figure in the carriage with an eye painfully noting the passing minutes and a hand irresistibly reaching towards the handle of the door.

Mirabeau had three great anxieties. He was anxious for the existence of the monarchy, he was anxious for the existence of the country, he was anxious for his own existence. His anxiety for the country was greater than his anxiety for the monarchy; his anxiety for himself was greater than either, for it comprehended both the other anxieties. He believed in the monarchy because he believed that it was essential to the well-being of France; but he believed, and with no want of judgment and with no want of justice, that he, even he, Mirabeau, was essential to the well-being of the one and of the other. The time had come, he said in his own splendid way to de la Marck, when men were to be valued by what they carried in the narrow space behind the forehead and below the two eyebrows. He believed—and indeed knew—that in that narrowed space of his below the enormous mass of hair which he called his 'hure,' or as who should say his boar's shock, lay the genius that could save France, the genius that could save the monarchy. He

may well be pardoned if it seemed strangely ridiculous to him, as it now seems ironically ridiculous to us, that a man with such a mission, so equipped by Heaven with all the gifts for such a mission, should be harassed, in the first place, by the stupidity of those with whom he had, for his misfortune and for the misfortune of France, to deal, and in the second place by what a man of genius has called the want of a few rascal counters. If Mirabeau had been a comfortably rich man—if, that is to say, he had been a man with an easy, immediate, and large command of money—he might have been less readily exasperated by the varying degrees of human imbecility which he encountered at every hand's turn.

But, quite apart from any question of what Mirabeau's means actually were, it must be remembered that Mirabeau might have been, in any case, comparatively a rich man if he had chosen to attend to his private affairs instead of devoting them to the public weal. Had he cared to occupy himself with the affairs of his inheritance instead of with the affairs of France he might have eaten well and lain softly all the days of his life, and owed no man a penny. But the affairs of France were for him a passion. They were to him all, and more than all, that his vehement flames of desire, his wild gusts of appetite, had been in the days of his hot youth. Mirabeau loved the gifts that money can give. No man ever loved them with a rarer zest. He loved to eat well and to drink of the best and to lie delicately.

To the last day of his life he loved to scatter money with a more than royal prodigality. It could not rest in his pockets ; it could not stay between his fingers. It is surely, therefore, so much the more to the credit of a man so prodigal, so luxurious, so fiercely appreciative of all that gives delight to the senses and satiety to desire, it is surely so much the more to his credit that he never once, we will not say prostituted his convictions, but even tampered with his convictions for any gain that such disgrace might bring him. Mirabeau took money of the King because he was a loyal, an avowed supporter of the monarchy, just as he took money of de la Marck because de la Marck was pledged to the royal cause. But there were other buyers in the great market of men who would gladly have bought Mirabeau at any price he chose to put upon himself.

It needed but a word or a sign from Mirabeau to win the unscrupulous stockjobbers who had held aloof while Necker made his ridiculous, his despairing appeals to patriotism and the nation. The hard-headed speculators who watched the fortunes of the Revolution as they would have watched a list of shares, would have bought up the orator at well-nigh any price that it might please his vanity to set upon his periods, his phrases, and his passion. But Mirabeau was not to be bought. It is true that he saw no wrong in taking the money of the Court under the conditions which led him to take it. No serious student of the career of Mirabeau, putting

himself with any vitality into the place of the man and the time of the man, need feel in any degree called upon to avow shame for him. Mirabeau was a monarchist to his heart's core, whether there was a penny to be made by the belief or whether there was not. He believed that he was the only man who could save the monarchy from the chaos into which he saw that the Revolution was reeling, long before there was any probability that there was a penny to be made by that belief either. So when the Court, so when the monarchy, however inspired, prompted, or goaded, chose to make overtures to Mirabeau, it seemed the most natural thing for Mirabeau to accept a reward for his services, exactly as he would have done if he had been a formally appointed minister with a formal portfolio under his arm. He did not ask for, and he did not get, a very large reward. All the money that there was in the royal exchequer, all the money that could by any pretence be lured into the royal exchequer, could not in itself express even approximately the true value of Mirabeau.

It was no new thought of Mirabeau's to turn to the King. The Revolution was not yet a year old when Mirabeau wrote to the King calling upon him to compare the new state of things with the old, and to find ground therein for comfort and for hope. He pointed out that one part of the acts of the National Assembly, and that the more considerable part, was evidently favourable to monarchical

government. Was it nothing, Mirabeau asked, to be without parliaments, without the old fantastic privileges, without a despotic clergy, without a dominant nobility? Mirabeau assured the King that the idea of forming a single class of all the citizens would have pleased the astuteness of Richelieu, as equality of surface always facilitated exercise of power. Several successive reigns of an absolute monarch would not, so Mirabeau vehemently insisted, have done so much for the royal authority as the one year of revolution had done. In the phrase of de Tocqueville, Mirabeau saw through and beyond the anarchical character of the Revolution. In other words, Mirabeau was a statesman in an age that wanted statesmen as he would have been a statesman in an age illustrious for statesmen. The Revolution, in the force of its primitive passion, struck at all authority, laughed at all tradition, defied all influence, and made its way resistlessly and remorselessly across a ruined world. Yet out of those very ruins a new power was to arise, an immense central power, which was to attract and absorb into unity all the fractions of authority which had formerly been dispersed through the whole fabric of society. The world, says de Tocqueville, has not seen such a power since the fall of the Roman Empire. It was this simple, regular, and imposing form of power which Mirabeau perceived through the dust and rubbish of ancient, half-demolished institutions.

Mirabeau had been one of the first to perceive the danger which threatened not merely the monarchy, but the very lives of the reigning King and Queen. It was plain to him that they were prisoners, and not merely prisoners, but prisoners under sentence of death. When the royal family had fixed their residence at the Tuileries, they lived the lives of captives. The Queen, who could not go abroad with any convenience, employed her mornings in superintending the education of her daughter and in working with her needle at tapestry. We are told and can well believe that her mind was too much occupied with the state of affairs to allow her to read, although her library had been brought from Versailles. Twice a week she received the Court before going to mass, and on those days she dined in public with the King. She passed the rest of her time with her family and children. The King's habits were greatly changed. He could not take his beloved exercise of hunting, and as exercise was necessary for him, he walked about the rooms till he was in a state of perspiration. He ate quickly and with good appetite, but he seems to have drank moderately. He wrote his letters, laboured at filing in his workroom, read, and amused himself with his children. At Versailles he had a locksmith's workshop well fitted up, and he used to employ himself in taking off locks and altering the wards, though it is said that he generally spoiled them. There was no forge, and not even a chimney in the room at the Tuileries, where he worked, and he was obliged

to be satisfied with working with the file. He had none of his books brought to Paris, except books of devotion, the revolutions of the different States of Europe, and the private history of Charles I. of England, a king whose career always had its strange fascination for him. During his residence at the Tuileries, if he wanted any other books, he got them from the National Library.

This monotonous life at the Tuileries, which was a disagreeable residence in summer, made the Queen wish for a change. To this no opposition was made, and early in June 1790 the royal family removed to Saint-Cloud. An immense crowd watched them leave the Tuileries, apparently to make quite sure that they were well secured by the National Guard. They went to Saint-Cloud like prisoners on parole. They might easily have escaped during the residence at Saint-Cloud, and there was a plan of escape, but it was not attempted. It was apparently soon after the royal family removed to Saint-Cloud that Mirabeau had his solitary interview with the Queen. The Court came back to Paris, to be present at the festival of July 14, but returned to Saint-Cloud after it was over. Even so much freedom was not long to be allowed to them. The prisoners whom Mirabeau pitied, the prisoners whom Mirabeau tried to save, were soon to learn that Paris was the cage from which they were never to be permitted to escape. It may not be surprising that the royal prisoners disliked Mirabeau, but it is

still less surprising that they turned to him when they had practically no one else to turn to.

The difficulty of the task that Mirabeau had undertaken increased with every hour, with every unsuccessful attempt to find believers and allies. The progress of the Revolution in France had gradually begun to attract the serious attention of other European States, which felt that their interests might be affected by the movement. The princes of the Germanic empire, ecclesiastic and lay, whose feudal rights in Alsace, Lorraine, and Franche Comté were destroyed on the night of August 4, had protested in January 1790. The deputies of the Circle of the Upper Rhine assembled at Frankfort, came to a resolution that the Emperor and the Germanic body were bound to protect the States, the nobility, and the clergy of the empire against the arbitrary acts of the National Assembly. The resolution was transmitted to the Emperor Joseph II., and on February 16 the King of Prussia, Frederick William II., nephew of Frederick the Great and ally of England, wrote to his minister at Ratisbon, to the effect that the empire was bound to use its exertions in favour of the princes who had been wronged in contravention of existing treaties. On February 11 the French minister, Montmorin, received a communication of the resolution of Frankfort with a fresh protest, which he sent to the Assembly, who referred it to the feudal committee.

In February 1790 Joseph II. died and his

death was followed by great changes. He was succeeded by his brother, Leopold II., whose administration of Tuscany, as Grand Duke, had been mild and beneficent. Leopold found his inheritance in confusion. Joseph, as a reformer, was in advance of the time. Austria and Russia were engaged in war with Turkey. England and Prussia were unfriendly to the empire. The Netherlands were in revolt against Austria, in consequence of the measures of Joseph. France was making her Revolution, and her King and her Queen, who was Leopold's sister, were prisoners in the capital. In January 1790, before the death of Joseph, a treaty had been concluded at Berlin by which Great Britain and Prussia declared that they would not interfere in the Netherlands, unless they should be invited or compelled by circumstances. The contracting Powers agreed to request his Imperial Majesty to secure the privileges of the Netherlands. If the Netherlands should become free, then the allies were to deliberate on the constitution, and to determine whether they should recognise the Netherlands as free or not. In consequence of this treaty the Netherlands took into their service an English, a Prussian, and a Dutch legion, and the States named a Prussian general the commander of this force.

While war between Russia and Sweden was still raging in Finland, a quarrel broke out between Great Britain and Spain about some English ships which had been seized by a Spanish squadron in

Nootka Sound. Great Britain immediately prepared a large naval force. On May 14, Montmorin communicated to the National Assembly information of the preparations of Great Britain, and stated that Louis had given orders for fourteen vessels of the line to be equipped immediately in the ports of the Mediterranean and of the Atlantic. The King had only given these orders by way of precaution, and hoped that peace would not be troubled, as he had received assurances from the British Cabinet of its wish to maintain the harmony between France and Great Britain. Nevertheless, Louis declared that he could not dispense with ordering these ships to be equipped. If, said Montmorin, England is armed, France cannot and ought not to continue unarmed. France must let Europe know that the establishment of her constitution was far from being an obstacle to the development of her force. Montmorin further urged that gratitude as well as interest commanded such a measure under circumstances which concerned Spain.

It was the common opinion in France that England intrigued to increase the embarrassments of the French Government ; and that English money was employed to produce disturbance, particularly as the troubles increased at the same time with the war-like preparations of England. Disturbances at Strasbourg, Nîmes, Toulon, and Brest were attributed to the secret agency of England. Though some of the clubs and societies in London had sent com-

plimentary addresses to the French Assembly, it was supposed that the British Cabinet, it was known that England's greatest statesman, entertained very different sentiments. The English ambassador had already been instructed to calm all suspicion, but the suspicion was difficult to cure. Nothing has ever been proved as to any secret influence of the British Government being exercised at this time to foment troubles in France. Necker often told his daughter that, though he had made the most diligent inquiry during his administration, he never could find the least evidence that English money had been employed for this purpose. The absurdity of the suspicion is made most apparent when we know that the aristocrats maintained that the English ministry paid the French revolutionists, and that the Jacobins affirmed that all the efforts of the counter-revolutionists were inspired by English gold distributed in France.

The King in his message had said that he expected that the Assembly would approve of the measures which he had taken, and would vote the necessary expenses. The Assembly adopted the King's wish ; but Alexander Lameth observed that it must be determined who should have the power of declaring war, if war should be necessary, the King or the Assembly. It was well known what Mirabeau's opinion was. He was supposed to have been gained by the Court ; and this was considered a good opportunity of depriving him of his popularity.

Mirabeau contended that as war is almost always an unforeseen event, and as hostilities commence before threats, the King, who has the care of the public interests, must repel hostile attacks, and war might thus commence before the Assembly could interfere. He therefore advised that the executive should have the power of resisting hostilities when commenced, and that the legislature, according to circumstances, should either allow the war to go on, or demand the restoration of peace. Barnave admitted that hostilities might commence before the opinion of the nation could be taken ; but he argued that hostilities were not war ; that the King ought to repel attacks, and immediately communicate with the Assembly, which should then declare its will. Barnave's speech was well received by the people. Mirabeau was denounced as having sold himself. There was hawked about the streets a pamphlet, entitled 'The Great Treason of the Count de Mirabeau.' If the question had been put after Barnave's speech his opinion might have prevailed ; but Cazalès and Mirabeau urged the Assembly to adjourn. Mirabeau replied on the last day of the debate. It was, he said, a strange madness, a deplorable blindness, which thus excited against one another men whom one common end, one common opinion, ought to unite, even in the most furious discussions. This madness made men put in the place of devotion to their country the angry passions of self-love ; made them the victims of popular prejudices.

Only a few days ago, he declared, the crowd would have carried him in triumph : and now they cry in the streets, " The Great Treason of the Count de Mirabeau." Mirabeau declared that he did not need this lesson to know that the distance was short between the Capitol and the Tarpeian rock ; but he insisted that the man who fought in defence of reason, in defence of his country, would not allow himself easily to be vanquished.

Mirabeau then examined the arguments of Barnave and showed that his opponent had not proposed to give to the Assembly more power than he, too, proposed ; but that Barnave's proposition of limiting the King's power to a simple communication to the Assembly, deprived the King of that consent which was necessary for the expression of the national will. If the King has not the initiative, Mirabeau said, do you mean also that he has not the veto ? If so, he argued that the King had no voice in the most important act of the national will. He asked them how they reconciled that with the powers which the Constitution had given to the King ; how they reconciled that with the public interest ? He declared that they would have as many provokers to war as there were passionate men. He defended with equal acuteness the case of the King having the initiative. With rare precision of thought and of language the orator repeated his blows till he had struck his adversary to the earth. He defended his own proposition against the

objections that had been made to it, and he triumphed with a triumph that was as complete as it was unexpected by his opponents.

The proposition of Mirabeau, as amended by Chapelier, was carried. The first article asserted that the power to make peace or war belonged to the nation, and that war could not be determined upon without a decree of the National Assembly, which should be made upon the formal and necessary proposal of the King, and must have his sanction. Thus the King had the disposal of the forces, gave notice of the commencement of hostilities, summoned the Assembly if it was not sitting, and proposed peace or war. The Assembly deliberated upon the proposal, and the King gave his sanction to the result of the deliberation. This decree gave joy to the constitutional party, and hope to the counter-revolutionists, who thought that public opinion was going to change, and that this victory of Mirabeau's would become theirs. Lafayette, who had sided with Mirabeau, wrote to Bouillé giving him hopes of tranquillity and moderation, and endeavouring, as he always endeavoured, to reconcile him to the new order of things.

In the meantime, however, the condition of European affairs had greatly and gravely changed, partly as a consequence of the accession of Leopold. The treaty of Reichenbach in July 1790 settled all disputes between Austria and Prussia. Austria made a truce with Turkey, and soon reduced the

Netherlands to submission. In August, Russia made peace with Sweden, though King Gustavus had lately gained a victory over the Russians ; and the Empress Catherine II. had now only Poland and the Turks to deal with. The States of Europe were at leisure to turn their attention to France. But the interest of Europe in the French Revolution was not yet for the hour momentous. Even the indignation of Burke did not discern all that the French Revolution meant, or the part it was destined to play in the politics of Europe. It was not what the foreign Kings or what the foreign statesmen thought of the Revolution that was of real importance to France or to Europe in 1790 and 1791. It was what Mirabeau thought that was important ; it was what Mirabeau was able to do that was momentous.

CHAPTER LXXV

MIRABEAU HERCULES

FOR three years the history of the French Revolution is, as we have said, the history of Mirabeau. He set his seal on every day of each year ; he saw everything and foresaw everything ; he was the greatest man in France, and he knew himself to be the greatest man in France. If a truth so clear to him then, so clear since to all the world, had been appreciated by those among his contemporaries whose appreciation was important or essential, it is as nearly certain as any unknown and unknowable thing can be certain that the record of the French Revolution would have read very differently. But it was his curse to be a man of genius in an age of men of mark, of men of virtues, of talents, of abilities. Mirabeau was misunderstood. He was mistrusted by the royalists as a republican, which he never was. He was mistrusted by the revolutionaries as a monarchist, which he never for one moment ceased to be. A revolutionist before the Revolution, he remained a monarchist at the moment when it was the purpose, covert or overt, of the Revolution to destroy the monarchy.

Mirabeau has been accused, unjustly, of being a counter-revolutionist. He was always a revolutionist, but, like all strong men, he was for a revolution according to his own ideas. As he said himself, he was not for a counter-revolution, but for a counter-constitution. He had little belief in and little respect for the men or the schemes of the Constituent Assembly. From the first he saw the insufficiency of their methods and the limitations of their statesmanship. When, against his will, a committee was appointed to draw up projects for the Declaration of Rights, it fell to his lot to present the report of the committee, but he did not present it without feeling and expressing regret for an ungrateful task. He declared that the committee submitted the report with extreme diffidence, but also with extreme docility. He insisted that the rock upon which all Declarations of Rights must inevitably strike was the certainty of encroaching, if only by way of maxim, upon the duties and the functions of legislation. He examined, one by one, what he thought the most dangerous features of the propositions, and entreated earnestly that the Declaration of Rights should not be set up as the prologue of the constitution of which it was properly the epilogue, in order that the principles of liberty, accompanied by laws directing their due exercise, should prove a benefit to the people and not a trap.

Mirabeau was right when he declared that stable

laws were of more immediate importance than vague declarations, however eloquent in language, however creditable to the heads and to the hearts of those who uttered them. But it must always be borne in mind that the laws which Mirabeau desired, and which he was convinced that France needed, were the laws of a constitutional monarchy. Mirabeau was a 'king's man' always in the sane and sober sense of the term. He was not for a king like Louis XIV., with his pretensions to despotism and his theory that all the land of France was vested in him by right. He was for a king such as England had accepted for so long, for a king such as Louis XVI. might very well be made, a constitutional monarch governing according to recognised laws accepted by the people. But he insisted upon the necessity for a king, and for giving very considerable power into the king's hand. When he argued in favour of the royal veto he declared emphatically that he believed the veto of the king to be so necessary that he would rather live in Constantinople than in France if it did not exist. He declared that he could admit of nothing more terrible than the sovereign aristocracy of six hundred persons who to-morrow might become permanent, the day after hereditary, and who would finish, like all the aristocracies of the world, by invading everything.

Against stupidity the gods fight in vain. Mirabeau urged that the members of the Constituent Assembly should be elective to the succeeding

Assemblies. The Assembly disdained his counsel, and passed its famous Self-denying Ordinance by which no member of the Constituent Assembly could be elected to its successor, the Legislative Assembly. It is hard to realise how many calamities might have been spared to France, how many stains spared to the Revolution, if the advice of Mirabeau had been taken. Mirabeau urged, too, what is now one of the unquestioned doctrines of any intelligent system of government, that the King's ministers might be selected from among the members of the Constituent Assembly. To the narrow minds and the narrow hearts of many of his hearers, the advice of the statesman, the counsel of the man of genius seemed the insidious suggestion, the ignoble appeal of personal ambition, of personal vanity. A man like Lanjuinais, a man like Blin, could fear Mirabeau, could distrust Mirabeau, could envy or hate Mirabeau, but could not understand him. He understood them and their petty fears and jealousies, and overwhelmed them with his Olympian scorn.

François Pierre Blin was the deputy for Nantes. He was a doctor of some sixty-three years. The most remarkable thing in his career is that he once was an opponent of Mirabeau. The next most remarkable thing was that he lived nearly to his century; he lived to be ninety-eight. He died in 1834. Blin made a covert attack upon Mirabeau in a speech based upon the fundamental theory that the only enemies of kings and of nations are

ministers of State. Lanjuinais carried on the attack, but made it no longer covert. Jean Denis Lanjuinais was some seventeen years a younger man than Blin. He was an advocate and an authority on ecclesiastical law. He represented Rennes. The advocate, like the doctor, has earned a kind of grotesque immortality by his opposition to Mirabeau. He assured the Assembly that it was already subjugated by the eloquent genius of one man, and he asked what would not that one man do if he were made a minister. He ended by making the motion that no member of the Assembly should be allowed to accept any place from the executive power. Mirabeau's reply was one of his masterpieces. He declined to believe that even Lanjuinais maintained that the chosen of the nation could not produce one good minister, or that the confidence accorded to a citizen by the nation could be a reason for excluding him from the confidence of the King. He declined to admit that an Assembly which had declared all citizens without other distinction than that of virtues and talents to have an equal aptitude for every employment could consistently deny that right to the twelve hundred deputies honoured by the suffrages of a great people. He concluded a long series of striking arguments by declaring that the mover of the motion must have had some secret motive, and that he believed the secret motive was to exclude certain members of the Assembly from the cabinet of the King. He therefore proposed as

an amendment to name for exclusion those members whom the mover of the motion seemed specially to fear, and he offered to give their names. Only one of two members of the Assembly, he said, could be the secret objects of the motion. All the other members had given sufficient proofs of love of liberty, of courage, of public spirit. Who could this member be? Mirabeau asked; then with increasing irony he said that his hearers had already guessed that it must be either the author of the motion or himself. Mirabeau concluded a great speech by formally moving that the exclusion be confined to M. de Mirabeau, deputy of the commoners of Aix.

The speech was magnificent, but the Assembly was immovable. Blin and Lanjuinais carried their point, dulness and mediocrity had their way, and France, in the fine phrase of Lamartine, was deprived of the services of the greatest political genius that modern times have seen. It is hardly surprising that Mirabeau should lose faith in a Revolution whose course came to be directed by nonentities like Blin and Lanjuinais, or that, deprived of the opportunity of rendering public service to his country and to his King, he should seek still to serve his country and his King in other ways. To understand Mirabeau's character rightly it must be remembered that his ambition was not personal aggrandisement, but to be of service to his country and to his King. He wished to be in power, because he knew himself well enough to know his own gifts. But he only

spoke the truth when he declared that he should count himself happy if, at the price of his exclusion from the ministry, he could preserve to the Assembly the hope to see several of its members, worthy of confidence and respect, become the confidential advisers of the nation and the King.

The nation and the King wanted advisers worthy of confidence and respect. The ministers were not only without popularity, but without power. They were suspected of plots and intrigues, or accused of indecision and weakness, and they had no friends either in the Assembly or out of it. Paris, instead of the former division into sixty districts, had recently been divided into forty-eight sections, with a newly organised municipality. The sections resolved to press on the Assembly the question of impeaching the ministers, and Bailly could not refuse to present a deputation from the sections at the bar of the Assembly. Danton read the address of the sections. His great athletic form, his large face strongly marked with the small-pox, his impetuous manner and sonorous voice, lent him a resemblance of a kind to Mirabeau.

The address assured the National Assembly that all France expected the ministers to give in a resignation which the Assembly would always have the right to call for when it should think proper. The Abbé Maury, who interrupted, was called to order. Cazalès said, with a sneer, that it was necessary to listen to everything, even to political

absurdities. Danton went on with the address unmoved. He said that the commune of Paris wished for the immediate dismissal of the ministers. Champion de Cicé was accused of having altered several decrees. Latour-du-Pin was an enemy of the Revolution, because he had exposed the frontiers and oppressed a great number of soldiers and subaltern officers. It was to no purpose to object that the commune produced no proofs. Danton insisted that the nation had a right to tell its servants that they were unworthy of the public confidence, simply because they persisted in holding power during the preparation of this impeachment. The president replied that the head of the nation would not ignore the charges which the municipality could doubtless establish by evidence. The Assembly would weigh the charges in its wisdom, and in the meantime it granted to the deputation the honours of the sitting.

Even Cazalès and his party, though opposed to the ministers, would not ask the King to dismiss them, for such a step would, in the eyes of the members of the Right, have been an attack on the King's prerogative. The ministers, however, did successively resign, with the exception of Montmorin, who was less an object of hatred than the rest. Duport-du-Tertre, an advocate, received the seals. Duportail, who was recommended to the King by Lafayette, succeeded Latour-du-Pin as Minister of War, and his first measures were to check the

authority of Bouillé. But no reorganisation of the ministry could have any satisfactory result so long as it was impossible for the King to include in his cabinet any of the men whose advice might have been of real service to him, and especially so long as he was unable to include the deputy for the commoners of Aix. As a minister Mirabeau might have combatted with success the four enemies of the throne whom he feared—Taxation, Bankruptcy, the Army, and the Winter. As a minister Mirabeau might have succeeded in staying the disorganisation that threatened to crumble into chaos. But he had to remain a minister without a portfolio, a minister without colleagues, a secret counsellor whose despair and mortification it was to see that advice neglected which he was convinced was calculated to save the State.

Mirabeau's position with respect to the King, and his own conviction of the necessity of stopping the revolutionary movement, prompted him to form far-reaching and comprehensive designs to which his genius gave the promise of success. But Mirabeau's schemes were ignored at a time when everyone connected with the Court had his own infallible panacea for the salvation of the State. In February 1791, however, Mirabeau formed a fresh plan for saving the monarchy, which he made during his presidentship of the Assembly. This tardy honour, this poor compensation for all he had been denied, came on January 29, 1791, when he was elected

president for the first time. It seems unnecessary to say that he made a masterly president. During his term of office he displayed unerring tact and ability: the chair had never been occupied with more judgment and impartiality. Bertrand de Moleville, who hated him and all of his inclining, had to admit that he showed himself as able to occupy the chair as to shine in the tribune, and that, in fact, no person presided with more dignity or gave better proof of the fact that the president was not solely the organ of the Assembly, but that he ought to be and could be its moderator. His answers to the different deputations that appeared in the Assembly all bore the genuine stamp of eloquence and wisdom; and if he always spoke as a revolutionist, his language, ably seasoned with patriotism, contained only the exact amount necessary to preserve his popularity.

Mirabeau's plan was made known to Malouet, who was present at a conference between Mirabeau and Montmorin, which lasted to a late hour at night. The Assembly was to be dissolved, a new one elected, and the Constitution to be revised. There were to be two chambers. The King was to have an absolute veto and the power of proroguing and dissolving the chambers. Mirabeau wished to secure the real advantages of the Revolution, and to establish a constitutional monarchy in which the power exercised in the name of the crown should be sufficient to maintain order without infringing liberty. Mirabeau knew that the chief

obstacle to all his schemes lay in Lafayette, with whom he had tried again and again to come to an understanding, but always without success. He declared that Lafayette, all powerful for doing harm, must become more and more powerless to prevent harm. He uttered the curiously exact prophecy that the shame of tolerating insurrection in the presence of thirty thousand armed men might drive Lafayette some day to fire upon the people, and in doing so to wound himself mortally. But a greater difficulty than Lafayette lay between Mirabeau and his wishes, and that was the distrust and the dislike of the courtly party. They would not forgive him for his past; they could not understand that a man could accept a revolution and remain a royalist. There were many among the adherents of the King, among the adherents of the Queen, who still believed that Mirabeau had his share, and that a great one, in the terrible days and the terrible deeds of the 5th and 6th of October.

Yet Mirabeau had been cleared of complicity in the October crimes, for all who really thought that his intelligence, if not his character, needed such clearing. The Châtelet had long been engaged in investigating the affair of the 5th and 6th October, 1789. The proceedings had been often interrupted and resumed, and they were now resumed again. Mirabeau and the Duke of Orleans were implicated, but the evidence was full of contradictions. When the Court ordered the proceedings to be resumed,

the object was to crush the Duke of Orleans and to leave Mirabeau alone. The Duke had been received with some applause on his return from England, and the Court had repulsed all his attempts to be restored to the King's favour. On August 7, 1790, the Châtelet laid before the Assembly the result of their proceedings with respect to the morning of October 6, 1789; and the Assembly instructed the committee of reports to bring before them a statement of any charges which affected the representatives of the Assembly. On September 30 and October 1, 1790, an elaborate report was read to the Assembly. The report declared that there was no evidence of the invasion of Versailles by the Parisians being the result of a plot. It admitted that there was some reason for a suspicion of the Court having anti-revolutionary designs. It decided that the charges against Mirabeau and the Duke of Orleans were not worth consideration. Certainly the charges against Mirabeau were not worth consideration. One of them was that when Mirabeau heard of the Parisians approaching he went up to the President Mounier, and advised him to pretend sickness, to adjourn the sittings, and go to the King. This prudent advice, which would have saved the Assembly from the humiliation to which it was afterwards subjected, was absurdly construed by Mounier into evidence of Mirabeau's complicity, as if there was anything strange in his knowing what was then generally known, and as if it could be

treason to go and inform the King. Other absurd charges, some of which were self-contradictory, were brought against Mirabeau. The evidence against him was of the most trumpery kind. The statement that he was seen to go about on October 5, brandishing a sabre, and inciting the mob to revolt and the soldiers to mutiny, was too ludicrous, too preposterous for a second's serious consideration. Men accused Mirabeau of many things, but they never accused him of being a fool. The conclusion of the report was a recommendation that the Assembly should declare that there was no ground of accusation against Mirabeau and the Duke of Orleans, and the Assembly by a great majority adopted the resolution. If the Court had really hoped to hurt the Duke, it had failed in its purpose. He may have been guilty, but it might have been foreseen that it would be impossible to punish him, even if his guilt had been satisfactorily proved, and it was not satisfactorily proved.

De la Marck has painted a moving picture of Mirabeau's horror on learning from his friend that the Queen really believed him to have been one of the authors of the October riots. De la Marck says that he turned green as with sudden sickness in his rage and indignation at the thought that such things could be believed about him. It is not, perhaps, surprising that the Queen should have entertained such a suspicion of Mirabeau. She knew very little about him. She had always regarded him as a

bitter enemy. It is probable that those about her always presented him in the blackest colours. But Mirabeau was too great a man not to know how much he might be misunderstood, too great a man not to be aware of the difficulties that lay between him and his purpose, too great a man to be dismayed by the difficulties, too great a man not to regret the misconception of his greatness. He looked to de la Marck as the man who was to make his name and his aim clear to posterity. He confided to de la Marck the papers which he called 'noble elements of apology.' He left his reputation and his fame in the hands of his friend. Lanfrey, in one of the most caustic of many mordant sentences, asks if Mirabeau's memory has not, on the whole, suffered more from his friends than from his enemies, and declares that it will go hard with his memory to redeem itself from the apologies of his friend de la Marck. The phrase is pungent; it is perhaps scarcely fair. De la Marck's vanity and narrowness of mind have left their stain upon his defence of Mirabeau. But we owe to him the material for forming the true opinion upon what Mirabeau did, and what Mirabeau meant to do, during the most momentous years of his life. When de la Marck died in 1833 he left to M. de Bacourt the correspondence with Mirabeau and the private papers which are now the most important material for the study of Mirabeau's mind and Mirabeau's ambition.

We are free to read the notes in which, day after

day, Mirabeau set forth his ideas, his fears and his hopes, the plans he conceived to guide or crush the Assembly, to save the monarchy, to save the life of the King. It was not his fault if the King learned no lesson from these clandestine letters, read over, as it has been happily said, in secrecy in the morning and forgotten long before the evening, letters that had to be returned to the writer as soon as possible, letters which were kept secret from the ministers who might perhaps have profited by them. It was not his fault if the faction which was called the Court grumbled at the fee of the only physician who by any chance could save its life. It was not his fault that he could not carry the portfolio of a minister. It was not his fault that he failed to obtain the friendship or secure the alliance of Lafayette. All that a great man could do Mirabeau did. His grasp of facts was gigantic. He watched the political situation from the pinnacle and not from the plain. His schemes were at once magnificent and exhaustive, his knowledge of men profound, and in consequence often disdainful—how disdainful is shown in some of his written comments on the men whom from time to time he proposed as possible ministers of a reorganised cabinet. But Mirabeau fought his great fight single-handed, and he had his worst enemies amongst those who professed allegiance to the cause he served, amongst the men and women who fled from France. Emigration was one of the greatest obstacles to the realisation of Mirabeau's dreams.

CHAPTER LXXVI

PARIS BY WAY OF COBLENTZ

IN the February of 1791, the King's old aunts, Mesdames Adelaide and Victoire, left France. They were uneasy ever since the civil constitution of the clergy had disturbed their devotional habits by allowing only priests who had taken the oath to officiate. They made their escape at night with the aid of Berthier, afterwards Prince of Wagram. They were, however, arrested at Moret by the municipality, and, after being released by the Chasseurs of Lorraine, they were stopped again at Arnay-le-duc, and not allowed to pursue their journey, though they had a passport from the King. Mirabeau had foreseen that their departure would engender suspicions of the King's wish for flight, and he had foretold that they would be stopped. When the arrest was made known to the Assembly, Mirabeau insisted that there was no law against the princesses leaving France, and he moved that the matter should be referred to the executive authority. He and Maury were for once on the same side; but it was not without difficulty that the Assembly adopted the motion of Mirabeau, which was in effect to allow

the princesses to go. General Menou settled the matter in their favour by saying that Europe would be surprised, no doubt, to learn that the National Assembly had spent four full hours in discussing the departure of two ladies, who would rather hear mass at Rome than at Paris. The King's aunts went to Rome, to seek peace amidst the ruins of the Eternal City.

But if Mirabeau had seen, and rightly seen, that the secret flight of the two royal ladies would stir suspicion against the King, he was well aware that the whole question of the emigration involved more serious problems than the flight of two royal ladies, or than the suspicions that their flight might cause. On the one hand, there was the incessant drain from the country of all those who were by habit or necessity attached to the royal cause. On the other hand, there was the increasing exasperation amongst the revolutionary party caused by the gathering outside France of so large a number of Frenchmen who were opposed, heart and soul, to the Revolution. The example which had been set in the summer of 1789 by the princes of the royal blood had been steadily followed with increasing volume as the months went by. Indeed, it may be said that emigration became a fashion. The emigrants did not anticipate a long exile. They expected to return when the royal authority was re-established. The head-quarters of the emigrants were transferred from Turin to Coblenz, at the junction of the Rhine

and the Mosel, within the territory of the Elector of Trèves, whose authority was almost supplanted by that of the intruders. Coblenz was a favourable position, near the north-eastern frontier of France, for keeping up communication with the foreign powers. The party which relied on raising the people in the south of France, the provincial nobility, were in a minority in the councils of the emigrants. The nobility who were attached to the Court, and made their profit out of it, the party who may properly be called the Court, looked only to foreign aid to enable them to re-enter France as conquerors. This Court at Coblenz was as frivolous, proud, and incompetent for all prudent action as it had been at Paris and Turin.

The recently published memorial of Jacques de Norvins, the historian of Napoleon, gives a vivid picture of the emigration and a moving appreciation of its errors. He describes the emigrants coming from all parts of the country, moving, with caution and carefully disguised, across the length and breadth of France, seeking for a shelter on the further side of the Rhine from the persecutions and the outrages of their neighbours and their former vassals. These groups of men, sometimes composed of three generations, father, son, and grandson, wandered like new Bohemians with their wallets on their backs, travelling for the most part at night, seeking such repose as they dared to snatch in the covers of the woods or the shelter of wretched barns, and living

on the poor supply of food they were able to carry with them. What, asks Norvins, could they have done for the cause of their captive King, dispersed, as they were, in the provinces where their own very lives were menaced? Seeing no safety for the monarchy or for themselves save in reunion, they found a new faith in their other princes, a new hope in that oriflamme which the brothers of sovereigns unfolded from afar.

Norvins admits that he recognised too late that things might have gone very differently with the monarchy if the two princes of the blood and the princes of the House of Condé had abstained from soliciting a sumptuous hospitality from the ecclesiastical Electors of the Rhine, but had chosen instead to unite with the nobility in the occupation of some frontier town upon the soil of France. In such a spot they should have offered an asylum to all who loved the throne ; in such a spot they should have formed a single camp under a single flag ; in such a spot, strengthened by all the aid that would have flowed in to them, they might from the beginning have opposed an armed and royalist France to a France armed and revolutionary. It is possible that if this had been done their ranks might have been swelled by many of the frontier garrisons who would not cross the frontier to earn the hated name of deserter, but who would have rallied round their old flag if it fluttered on French soil. Had this been done the army of royalist opposition,

instead of entering France at the heels of a foreign invader, would have preserved its honour in marching alone against the enemies of its country and its King. Norvins denies that it is any answer to this idea to say that the people of Paris would have killed the King the moment the royal standard was unfurled. They did kill him though it was not unfurled, and though they found themselves the masters of the country, of the army, and of the scaffold. Nothing could have been worse than the result of the emigration. It was a blunder from first to last.

But for the most part the emigrants made their blunder with a light heart. Young gentlemen in Paris made up their bundles and said their farewells 'pour aller de l'autre côté faire la contre et revenir passer l'hiver à Paris.' Their duty expressed itself in the slang phrase 'faire la contre;' their faith in the announcement of a speedy return to Paris. There was even a certain rivalry in the game of emigration; the sooner a man started the better, 'pour n'être pas mal vu à Coblenz.' Whenever one royalist met another in the streets of Paris the question was 'When do you start?' There came a time when those who had not made their way betimes to the sham Court at Coblenz found their reception by the princes of the iciest kind. There came a time when the devotion of an emigrant was judged by the date of his arrival, and his arrival by his importance. An obscure country gentleman might calculate upon a civil reception at a relatively late period. A gentle-

man of ancient name and high position ran every risk of being flung into the Rhine by the gentlemen of the Body-Guard who had been more prompt in their flight from France. This fate, which befell many tardy comers, very nearly befell the Prince de Saint-Mauris, son of the Prince de Montbarrey, the former Minister of War. We have met with Saint-Mauris before. His name had served to save his father's life in the wild hours of fear which had followed upon the fall of the Bastille. If he had ceased to sympathise with the Revolution his repentance came too late, and he would have gone swimming in the Rhine but for the intervention of the Count de Provence. But though Monsieur saved Saint-Mauris from a ducking, he would not keep him near his person, and would do no more than assist him to cross the Rhine and seek a shelter with his sister, the Princess of Nassau-Siegen. This shelter Saint-Mauris soon left to return to France, where the scaffold awaited him. The proscription of Coblenz surrendered him to the proscription of Robespierre. Chateaubriand, too, has told in his '*Mémoires d'Outre-tombe*,' how when he returned from America to join the royal cause he met with a sour welcome, and was assured that there were already too many of those who were brave after the battle. Those who were so fortunate as to be favourably received by the princes generally obtained a somewhat cool word of approval from Monsieur de Provence, who occasionally added that he was

glad to see the new comer, while the Count d'Artois is reported to have been slightly warmer in his salutations.

Vanity, folly, and ingratitude were indeed the characteristics of that Court which had transformed Coblenz into a town choking with Frenchmen, glittering with the splendour of a staff that would have sufficed for an army of a hundred thousand men, brave with the scarlet uniforms of the new regiments of the 'Hommes d'Armes' who were intended to take the place of the French Guards, whose name and uniform were now formally proscribed because of their treason to the crown. To Coblenz came Calonne, and from Coblenz to Frankfort, where he acted as the princes' plenipotentiary and also as their banker, without any further guarantee than their good words and his own hopes. To Coblenz also came and stayed that marvellous man-at-arms the Chevalier Guiot de Malseigne, the military Hercules, the Ajax of the new Iliad, a soldier of the build of Porthos and the daring of d'Artagnan. To Coblenz came, or at least wrote, Froment, who had made his stand for Church and King at Nîmes, and believed himself to have some claim upon the favour of the princes. Froment knew that it was the plan of the princes to form legions in France of all those who were attached to the King, and to employ them until the troops of the line should be reorganised. Froment, who wished to be at the head of the royalists, whom he had

directed and commanded in 1789 and 1790, wrote to the Comte d'Artois to grant him the brevet of colonel-commandant, and begged him to give some intimation that every royalist who should unite under his command a sufficient number of citizens to form a legion might expect the same distinction. Froment proposed that the new legions should be called Royal Militia. The Comte d'Artois was not unfavourable to the request of Froment, but the members of his council could not tolerate the proposal of giving military rank to one who was not a noble, and the scheme failed.

The Assembly had sought to do something to check the emigration. The Committee on the Constitution had considered whether the principles of the Constitution, and the conservation of liberty, public order, and the resources of the kingdom were consistent with a law against emigration. The more the committee had considered the question, the greater were the difficulties, the more numerous the exceptions which it would be necessary to introduce into a general measure forbidding emigration. The committee had, however, framed a draft of a law which many maintained to be contrary to established principles, to smack of a dictatorship. On the 28th February, 1791, before the draft was read, Le Chapelier asked the Assembly to determine whether they would ever adopt a law against emigration. Robespierre said that he was no more in favour of such a law than Le Chapelier, but that it ought

to be discussed, and should not be rejected except on grounds of reason and public interest. The Assembly was immediately in an uproar. Some shouted to Le Chapelier to read the draft, others shouted to him not to read it. Merlin urged that Rousseau had laid it down in the 'Social Contract' that in times of trouble emigration might be forbidden.

To quote Rousseau was to quote gospel for the greater part of the Assembly, but against the authority of Rousseau Mirabeau asserted the authority of Mirabeau. He read a letter which he had addressed to the then King of Prussia on his accession to the throne, in which he advised the King to allow his subjects to leave their country when they pleased. In this letter he said that the most tyrannical laws on emigration never had any other effect than to drive people to emigrate, contrary to that natural wish, perhaps the strongest of all, which attaches a man to his native country. Mirabeau now proposed that the draft should not be read, and that the Assembly should pass to the order of the day, without prejudice to the execution of the decrees already made with respect to persons who had pensions or salaries paid by the nation, and who were out of the kingdom. But the Assembly insisted on hearing the draft of the law, and Le Chapelier read it.

It was to the effect that in times of trouble the National Assembly should be empowered to appoint a council of three persons, who alone should exer-

cise a dictatorial power with respect to the right of quitting the kingdom and the obligation of returning to it. This commission should name the absent persons who were bound to return, and the persons so named should be bound to obey, under the penalty of losing the rights of French citizens and the confiscation of their property. Mirabeau spoke again ; he was opposed, but he insisted on speaking. He declared that the National Assembly had not shown to the Committee on the Constitution the same respect that the Athenians did to Aristides whom they allowed to be the judge of the morality of his own plan. He maintained that the horror which was shown at hearing the draft of the committee proved that the deputies were as good judges of this morality as Aristides, and that they had done well in reserving to themselves the decision. Mirabeau said that he would prove that the barbarity of the proposed law was the most complete proof of the impracticability of a law on emigration. He admitted that there might be occasions in which measures of police were necessary, though they might be against principles, even against the laws ; but between a measure of police and a law the distance was immense. The Assembly could adopt a measure of police, but the question remained whether they ought to adopt it, and whether it was politic to attempt to keep citizens in the empire otherwise than by the blessings of the law, the advantages of liberty. Mirabeau asserted boldly

that for his own part he would consider himself released from every oath of fidelity towards those who should have the infamy to name a dictatorial commission. He declared that the popularity which he had had the honour to enjoy like others was not a feeble plant, but that its roots were deep in the immovable basis of reason and of liberty. If you make a law against the emigrants, he concluded, I swear that I will not obey it.

Even this defiance did not end the discussion. Vernier proposed to adjourn the question, and Mirabeau claimed the right to speak again on the adjournment. Some member was foolish enough to ask by what right Mirabeau exercised a dictatorship in the Assembly. Mirabeau might have appealed to the right of genius, but Mirabeau did not waste so much time. He occupied the tribune without troubling himself to reply to the question. There was some opposition to his speaking, but in the end, of course, the Assembly heard him. Mirabeau exhorted those who interrupted him—and the interruptions were incessant—to remember that he had combatted despotism all his life, and to rest assured that he would combat it so long as he lived. In those words Mirabeau reminded his hearers that despotism was not limited to one party, or to one creed, but throve in the intolerable abuse of power by any party or by any creed. One of the incessant interruptions wrung from him a reply. It was one of the many interruptions that came from the Left,

where Barnave and the Lameths sat together, but it moved Mirabeau to reply. 'Silence!' he thundered; 'silence, those thirty voices!' and as he spoke he looked in disdain at the little group of his enemies. There was silence.

Mirabeau spoke vehemently, passionately, furiously. He did not carry his own motion. The motion of Vernier for the adjournment was carried. But Mirabeau carried his point. The proposed law against emigration was shelved for the hour, and for the time no such law came into being. It was, after all, a triumph for Mirabeau, a triumph over the policy of brute force which was gradually asserting itself in the clubs and in the streets, but which had not yet succeeded in dominating the Parliament of the nation.

But the fight in the Assembly was not Mirabeau's only, or Mirabeau's most serious, fight that day. The hatred that he now aroused in the hearts of the men of the Left was not exhausted by the struggle over the law against emigration. It is said that his opponents carried their antagonism so far as to forget the elements of decent behaviour. It is said that he had been invited, with others, to dine at d'Aiguillon's, and that when he arrived at the house he was refused admission. If it is true, it reflects the deepest disgrace upon d'Aiguillon; but it would be an impertinence to suggest that the insult was important enough to permit any expression of sympathy for Mirabeau. Perhaps there were those who hoped

that after this rebuff Mirabeau would not venture to make an appearance at the Jacobin Club. If there were any such, they were bitterly disappointed. On the evening of February 28 Mirabeau, fresh from what was practically a victory, if a victory dearly bought, in the National Assembly, made his appearance in the hall of the Jacobins. It was always rash to defy Mirabeau; in this instance the defiance was more than usually vain.

We have two accounts of what happened at the Jacobin Club that night. One is from the pen of Camille Desmoulins. The other is from the pen of a Swiss, Oelsner. The whirligig of time had converted Camille Desmoulins from an adorer of Mirabeau into a virulent assailant. The days when he raved about the demigod and extolled his maraschino and his opinions with an equal enthusiasm had passed away. Now, if the report of Desmoulins were to be trusted, Mirabeau sank into insignificance and impotence before the attacks of an Adrien Duport and an Alexander Lameth. According to Camille Desmoulins, who is seldom happy in his images, Mirabeau is a new Christ on a new Calvary, and Camille has not the wit to see that the parallel, for all its offensiveness, is only to the advantage of Mirabeau. If the Jacobin Club on that winter's night were indeed a Calvary, then, to pursue the analogy Mirabeau was a martyr and a saviour. But it would be absurd to take Camille Desmoulins seriously, or to rely seriously on his account of any

event. He was above all things emotional, sensitive to the impressions of the hour ; he cannot be gravely credited with opinions of his own ; he was the prey of impulses, the sport of passions, a fascinating child.

But we get some idea from Oelsner of what really happened. Oelsner looked on composedly ; he was a stranger, a Teuton, an observer ; he was foreign to the malignity of Desmoulins ; he was alien to all partisanship. He saw one man fighting on one side and others fighting against him, and he recorded the result of the struggle as composedly as if he had been witnessing a bull-fight or a scuffle of gladiators in the arena. And his account undoubtedly gives the laurels to Mirabeau. Duport attacked Mirabeau savagely. Lameth attacked Mirabeau savagely. Mirabeau had long ago protested against treating difference of opinion as a crime, and substituting abuse for argument and calumny for logic. Lameth's attack was a whirlwind of abuse and calumny. Lameth sat down amid the bull-like bellowings of his admirers ; it seemed for a moment to the spectator as if Mirabeau was alone, friendless, helpless. But Mirabeau rose to his feet ; Mirabeau maintained his right to speak against a hostile president, and Mirabeau spoke. His speech in its fury and its passion, its force and its eloquence, would seem to have puffed Lameth into space. The applause that rewarded Lameth was redoubled for Mirabeau when he declared that he was not going to leave the

Jacobin Club; that he would remain with it even unto ostracism. He left the club a victor for the hour; he may well have believed that he had broken its power.

It is curious that Von Holst, in his scholarly study of Mirabeau—perhaps the most interesting contribution to the history of the French Revolution that America has given—Albert Stern, in his admirable book on Mirabeau, and Aulard, in his magnificent volumes on the ‘History of the Jacobin Club,’ have completely ignored one account of this memorable, this terrible evening. It is to be found in the letter of Mr. A. W. Miles to Lord Rodney, written on April 1, 1791. He is speaking of the two Lameths and their jealousy of Mirabeau’s popularity and influence, ‘both which they lately attempted to destroy in the Jacobins, denouncing him as a traitor to his country on account of his opposing in the National Assembly a decree of confiscation of the property of emigrants.’ ‘I was present,’ says Miles, ‘at this extraordinary denunciation. The conduct of Mirabeau, whatever might have seduced him into the path of rectitude at the time, was highly meritorious; and yet, virtuous and laudable as it was, the consciousness of the act could not sustain him under the pressure of the attack. I sat next to Charles Lameth, who, while Mirabeau, trembling and pale, was defending himself in the tribune, frequently exclaimed: “O, le scélérat! O, le gueux!” and while the Marquis de Saint-Hurage, with his usual

vulgarity and violence, vociferated : “ Ah, le coquin, vous l’avez déterré. Il faut le pendre ! ” You would have been astonished at the miserable answer which Mirabeau made to an accusation in which justice, humanity, and policy must have furnished him with abundant matter for defence. Instead of availing himself of any of the arguments to be drawn from these considerations, he appealed to the generosity and candour of the club, requested the members to recollect that he renounced the Society of 1789 for that of the Friends of the Constitution—the Jacobins, from whom death alone would separate him. This assurance, and the gratification felt at his defection from the club in the Palais Royal, procured him a pardon, and, amidst plaudits, he descended from the same tribune which, amidst groans, reproaches, and hisses, he had mounted in a panic, and in which he was some time before he could obtain a hearing.’ The evidence of all these three accounts certainly goes to show that Mirabeau was exceedingly agitated by the attack upon him in the Jacobins, but it also goes to show that he was for the time successful, and that he left amidst the applause of the club. His arguments may have seemed weak to an English stranger. But Mirabeau knew his audience, and if what he said was sufficient to convert a hostile into a friendly audience, then it served Mirabeau’s turn.

In this same month of February 1791, and on the very day of this discussion concerning the emigrants,

a mob from Paris made an attack upon the prison of Vincennes, in which the municipality of Paris intended to place some of the prisoners from the overcrowded prisons of the capital. It was a kind of bastard taking of the Bastille, and in it, as in the greater business, the brewer Santerre played a part. Various reasons have been given for this somewhat burlesque enterprise. According to some, it was, of course, a plot of the Duke of Orleans. According to others, there was a popular belief that a subterranean passage joined the prison of Vincennes to the Tuileries, and that the King intended to make his escape by this passage. Others assert that the whole demonstration was got up in order to place Santerre at the head of the National Guard instead of Lafayette. If that were its object it failed signally. Lafayette came swiftly to the spot at the head of his National Guards, and easily dispersed the rioters, about sixty of whom were made prisoners. So far the episode was unimportant enough. But it has incidentally a graver importance. It is intimately associated with the episode which is known as the Day of Daggers.

Much that is absurd has been written about the Day of Daggers. It has been gibbeted by the lampoonists of the Revolution as a grotesque and Hudibrastic attempt on the part of a few hot-headed and weak-witted gentlemen to carry off the King, after forming themselves into a secret association every member of which secretly carried a dagger. The

actual facts of the case appear to be these. Many, if not all, of the royalist gentlemen still remaining in Paris, still in attendance upon their King, believed very earnestly and honestly that the life of the King was in danger. How far they were justified in their belief the student who recalls June 20 and August 10 in 1792 can judge for himself. At all events, they did hold the belief; they were very anxious for the safety of the King, for the security of the palace, and they got into the way of assembling daily in the apartments of the Tuileries to exchange the news of the city and to discuss the position of affairs. They were certainly in no sense a secret society; in fact, their meetings were far too public for prudence. The legend of the knights of the dagger seems to have arisen in this fashion, according to one who knew the palace and its people well in those days, the Count de Paroy.

An old provincial nobleman, more than sixty years of age, the Chevalier de Court, going one day to pay his court to the King, in very simple dress, carried under his coat a little hunting knife that it had always been his habit to wear in lieu of a sword. A National Guard noticed this hunting knife, and in the fervour of his zeal arrested the old gentleman under the pretext that he was carrying a dagger. The mistake was recognised with the first explanation the Chevalier de Court made, but the opportunity was too good for the pamphleteers to lose, and the trifling event was magnified into the

existence of a mysterious organisation of knights of the dagger.

In the February of 1791 the royalists who were in touch with the Court were much alarmed by sinister rumours which circulated through the clubs to the effect that the Jacobins were planning a fresh rising, and that it was especially aimed against the King. The royalist gentlemen made a point, therefore, of visiting the Tuileries not merely on the Tuesdays and the Sundays of formal reception, but on the other days of the week, in order that if any attempt were made to seize upon the King they might be at hand to do their best to prevent it. The rumour spread that the Jacobin plot was to break out in a popular rising like the rising of October 5, 1789. When, on February 28, the rioting began, and Santerre's mob attacked Vincennes, the royalist gentlemen believed that the hour of threatened conspiracy had sounded, and they hastened to rally at the palace, armed with swords and pistols. At about eight o'clock the soldiers returned from Vincennes, having quelled the disturbance, and as everything appeared to be quiet the assembled gentlemen prepared to depart. But as they issued from the royal apartments they were seized upon by the soldiers, arrested, searched, disarmed, and driven down the stairs with blows and thrusts. Certain officers of the National Guard, angered at the brutality of the soldiers, hastened to inform the Duke de Brissac and the Duke de Villequier of what was happening,

and they in their turn related the matter to the King. The King immediately quitted his rooms, and, coming into the hall where several of the gentlemen still were, he assured them that he was profoundly touched by their devotion to his person, and thanked them with all his heart. As, however, their presence caused uneasiness to the National Guard, who would not allow him to have any other defenders than themselves, he requested all the gentlemen to disarm then and there, and leave their weapons behind them. This they did, and went their way ; and each as he went out was searched by the soldiery. Lafayette ordered the weapons left to be confiscated, but that same evening they were seized by the soldiers, and sold on the following day for next to nothing. It was only natural that the Jacobin journals should make merry over the hustled, maltreated royalists and the ludicrous fiasco of their enterprise. But it is only fair to remember that, if the enterprise had the misfortune to be ludicrous, it was not dishonourable, and that the Knights of the Dagger are as fictitious as the Heroes of the 'Vengeur.'

CHAPTER LXXVII

THE FALL OF THE TITAN

EARLY in March the King fell ill. It is hardly surprising that the new conditions of his life, circumscribed and guarded, the change from the liberal air of Versailles to the close atmosphere of a capital city, should have told upon the health of a man who loved the open air like a trapper, and found health and pleasure in the rudest forms of physical exercise. To the leaders, however, of the revolutionary press the King's indisposition was a theme only for mirth or for suspicion. Desmoulins made merry over the fact that the majesty of the Assembly's sittings should be interrupted daily 'to hear the ridiculous technology of the doctors on the occasion of the cold of the eldest of the Capets.' Marat, on the other hand, was not hilarious. To his dark mind all things were darkly suspicious, and the King's cold only another part of the eternal plot against the Revolution. The Friend of the People denied that the King had ever been ill, and insisted that the pretended malady was only an imposition practised by the ministers, with the connivance of the physicians, to favour the King's escape.

Politics are seldom a school for manners, and political journalism is not always urbane. It was the misfortune of the French Revolution that, as Mirabeau had complained, its politicians always persisted in regarding difference of opinion as a crime and personal abuse as argument. It was the misfortune of the French Revolution that its journalists on all sides behaved with a ferocity, with a brutality, that has seldom been rivalled, and that could not be surpassed.

Undoubtedly the King was ill. It ought to be possible for a politician to champion the purest republicanism without finding in the illness of a king a subject merely for mirth or insult. Kings are mortal, and can catch cold as readily as the meanest. Perhaps the official bulletins, perhaps the ministerial journals, gave a somewhat exaggerated importance to the condition of the King's health. But it had always been the custom to attach a great importance to the health of reigning kings, and it was hardly reasonable to expect the official world and the ministerial world to change its habits because new opinions were abroad in France. Undoubtedly the King was ill; undoubtedly the condition of his health was of importance. But another man was ill too, the condition of whose health was of infinitely more importance than that of the King. Mirabeau was ill, dangerously ill. During his presidency he had for two days been obliged to absent himself from the chair, and in the

first part of the month of March he suffered from violent attacks of colic. Everything combined against him to increase his illness. The uncertainty of his position—distrusted by the Court on the one side, distrusted by the democrats on the other—must have harassed even his gallant spirit. He had worked terribly hard in the last few years, and he had lived terribly hard as well. If he worked like ten men, he also played like ten men. He ate much, or at least he loved good cheer. He drank much, though not to excess ; drinking, said the younger Mirabeau, was the only vice his brother had left to him. He loved much—often in the crudest significance of the word. The sensual excesses which his great physique might have endured under other conditions—conditions of activity, exercise, the open air—told heavily upon him at a time when his political labours had debarred him from all custom of exercise. Of late days he had even driven in a carriage from his own door to the door of the Assembly. He seemed like Hercules, to have held the world on his back for a season, with all its pains and all its pleasures ; but, like Hercules, he groaned beneath the load, and now it overcame him.

He appears to have been conscious of his fading health, of his waning strength ; he seems to have spoken at times with pleasure of the prospect of approaching death. He was weary, he was outworn ; but his courage was indomitable. Though he might well despair alike of his friends and his

enemies, though he might feel with unfathomable bitterness the hopelessness of the task that he essayed, he never showed a sign of weakness, he never stayed his hand from the task. He came to the Assembly again and again in such a condition of health that it seemed amazing that he could go abroad at all, much less stand and speak. No subject was too little or too great for the last flame of his vast intellect. He read before the Assembly a long speech on the question of mines. He played a part in the discussion on the regency. When his friends told him that he was attempting impossibilities he bade them never vex him with that fool's word impossible, and applied himself with more desperate energy than ever to the work at hand. His interest in the discussion on mines was largely an interest of friendship. The question before the Assembly was to fix what in the future should be the rights of mine-owners. De la Marck, who was interested in mines, was anxious that Mirabeau should exert his influence on the side he advocated.

Mirabeau made a great speech on the first debate, on March 21st. On the 22nd he made a sudden and successful attack upon the war minister, Duportail, for his neglect to defend the frontier of Alsace. He took a conspicuous part in the debates on the regency. Only a little while before Mirabeau himself had asked for a law of regency, but now he had changed his mind, and wished to

retard a discussion from which the monarchy could hope for little good. On March 22, therefore, when Thouret brought forward a project for a regency law prepared by the Constitutional Committee, Mirabeau opposed the precipitate introduction of the question. He declared that he was not prepared for the debate, and he defended his want of preparation by the wretched state of his health. Cazalès, who seldom showed regard for Mirabeau, now rose and supported his plea, reminding the Assembly that under similar conditions the English House of Commons had taken into consideration the state of health of Charles James Fox. But the appeal was unsuccessful. Duport somewhat pompously declared that the Assembly should be guided by the light of pure reason alone, and not by the magic of great names, like the names of Pitt and Fox. The debate began; it lasted some time; Mirabeau spoke often. The question was difficult and complex, and Mirabeau's attitude towards it not entirely easy to understand. He maintained still, as he had long maintained, that only a prince of French birth could hold the regency. But on the question whether the regency should be absolutely hereditary, or chosen by an assembly especially elected for the purpose, he seemed at first undecided. In the end, however, he declared that in a constitutional system it mattered little which scheme was adopted, and he concluded that it would be better to set aside the elective and accept the hereditary

plan. This was the conclusion to which the Assembly finally came.

It is said that after the conclusion of the debate on the regency Mirabeau committed the folly of sharing in a wild supper party, and of passing the night in the company of two dancing-women. The story may or may not be true. From what is known of Mirabeau, it does not bear on its face the seal of falsehood. On March 26, in any case, he hastened to his house at Argenteuil to get some little strength from the pure country air. But he was so ill during the night that on the morning of the 27th it was as much as he could do to drag himself to Paris.

He should not have attempted to drag himself to Paris, but it was characteristic of the man to do so. Great in so many things, he was great also in his friendships. He called de la Marck his friend; he believed that he was indebted to him for much. The discussion on mines was to be resumed, and de la Marck's interests were concerned. He had promised to do all he could for de la Marck, and he was resolved to keep his word at whatever risk. When he got to Paris de la Marck visited him, and was so shocked at his appearance and condition that he entreated him not to go to the Assembly. But Mirabeau insisted. 'My friend,' he said, 'those people will ruin you if I do not go.' He would not even allow de la Marck to accompany him. He went to the Assembly. He did everything in his power to shape the law according to his own wishes. He

spoke five times, and the question was settled as he wished. After the sitting was over he staggered out on to the Terrace of the Feuillants, where a young doctor named Lacheze was waiting for him. Lacheze carried him in his carriage to de la Marck's house, where Mirabeau fell helpless and exhausted on a bed. 'Your cause is gained,' he said to de la Marck, 'but I am a dead man.'

Lacheze carried Mirabeau to his country house at Argenteuil, where the pains of his malady increased. He was very anxious to be attended by the already celebrated physician Cabanis, and he insisted on returning to Paris, unaware that Cabanis was on the point of setting out to find him at Argenteuil. When Mirabeau got to Paris he took a bath, which made him feel so much better that he insisted, in his madness, on going to the Italian opera in the evening. That was his last appearance in public. He grew worse, and was got to his house with difficulty. Cabanis was summoned, and found his case critical. On Tuesday, March 29, there was still some hope that he might get better, but on the Wednesday he grew worse.

It was soon known that Mirabeau was seriously ill, and at once the sympathy and alarm of all classes and parties were general. The Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin, says Norvins, became a neutral and friendly territory during the brief malady of Mirabeau, where men of every party met in common anxiety to ask each other how Mirabeau fared, and

if his state were better or worse. 'How many hours I passed,' wrote Norvins years afterwards, 'in that street, where a room on the first floor of a little house enclosed the destiny of the French monarchy and of the country!' It was in that street, he says, that he learned to what a degree of civilisation and of true fraternity a common misfortune could bring beings the most unlike and alien, the most exalted or the most degraded, in memories, in hopes, in education, and in prejudices. A strange familiarity full of the kindest feeling governed the crowd that daily assembled in the neighbourhood of Mirabeau's dwelling. It had become a sanctuary, a palladium; people came there freely who would have been insulted or attacked in other quarters of the town.

Mirabeau soon felt that he was doomed, and abandoned all hope. Hearing the sound of cannon, he said to Frochot, 'Are these already the obsequies of Achilles?' To Talleyrand, who came to see him, he gave the draft of a speech he had prepared on the law relating to wills, asking to have it read in the Assembly. It should be humorous, he said, to hear a speech against wills by a man who is no more, and who has just made his own. His thoughts were busy with the action of England towards France, and he spoke of Pitt. 'Pitt,' he said, 'is the minister of preparations; he governs with threats. Had I lived I should have given him some trouble.' He faced his fate with courage—with

something of a pagan calm. Looking upon the sun which shone, as we know, so brightly in those April days when he lay a-dying, he said : ' If that is not God, it is, at least, His cousin.' ' Open the window,' he said to Cabanis ; ' I know that I shall die to-day All that remains is to steep myself in perfumes, to crown myself with garlands, to surround myself with flowers, and so to enter peaceably into the eternal sleep.' A little later, as it has been finely said, the death cry of the eagle succeeded to the death song of the swan. ' I carry with me the doom of the monarchy, whose ruins will become the spoil of factions.' On the morning of April 2 he traced upon a slate a wish for sleep—only sleep. He asked de la Marck, who had professed an admiration for beautiful deaths a little while before : ' Well, dear connoisseur in the art of dying, are you content with me ?' On the morning of April 2 he died in the arms of de la Marck. He was in the forty-second year of his age.

When de la Marck was convinced that Mirabeau was dying he entreated him to allow his private papers to be destroyed, among which were his letters to the King and the Queen. Mirabeau replied : ' What, would you have me die altogether ? Some success at the tribune has scarcely effaced the remembrance of my irregularities ; but in that portfolio is my justification, my glory ; by means of it would be known my views, my plans, my soul, my genius—all that would show me to my fellow-

citizens such as I am, all that would have exalted me hereafter ; and you ask it to be sacrificed !' De la Marck represented to him that he could not deceive the confidence of the King, nor aggravate the misfortunes of the Queen, whose fate he pitied, and whose character he respected. Mirabeau then consented to allow de la Marck, with the aid of Pellenc, to go through all his papers. They did so, and burned a large quantity. What were not destroyed de la Marck took charge of, and kept in a place of safety, to be given to the world in their due season.

It was rumoured abroad that Mirabeau had been poisoned—poisoned in some mysterious way by certain of his enemies. To refute this Cabanis published his account of the last days of Mirabeau ; but the belief was widespread. The conduct of his secretary, de Comps, who in his despair tried to kill himself, gave some colour to the story, and Stern, in his *Life of Mirabeau*, declares that the family of Mirabeau never ceased to believe that he had been poisoned. Madame de Tourzel records in her memoirs that the Queen ordered her physician, Vicq-d'Azir, to be present at the report of the post-mortem examination, and to give an account of it to her. According to Vicq-d'Azir, mortification had set in so quickly that the body had to be placed in a tent in the middle of his garden. The Queen asked Vicq-d'Azir if he undertook to say that Mirabeau was not poisoned. Madame de Tourzel says that

Vicq-d'Azir made an evasive reply, afraid to answer in the affirmative for fear of the vengeance of the Jacobins. It must be remembered that the rumour of poison, on the sudden death of any great man, is easily spread, readily believed, and difficult to refute. The state of Mirabeau's health and the rashness of Mirabeau's conduct seem quite sufficient to account for his death without seeking a cause more characteristic of the Rome of the Borgias than the Paris of the Revolution.

Nevertheless, Count de Montgaillard, in his *Souvenirs*, is very precise in his affirmation of the poisoning of Mirabeau. There can be no doubt, he says, of his tragic death. The three doctors, Dessault, Pelletan, and Lacoste, the operators of the dissection, declared formally in 1793 to the Committee of Public Safety of the Convention that they had found the traces of poison in the stomach and the intestines, and that they were convinced that Mirabeau had been poisoned. According to Montgaillard, the poison was administered during a dinner given to Mirabeau at Talleyrand's suggestion by thirty-eight influential deputies of the Right and Left. The dinner was at a restaurant in the ground floor of the Opéra Comique Théâtre in the Boulevard des Italiens, the restaurant afterwards occupied by Citizen Rose. When all the guests were assembled strict orders were given that the doors were to be closed, and that no stranger was to be admitted into the dining-room on any pretext whatever. For

some reason or other, Prince Charles of Hesse, who was devoted to Mirabeau, had his suspicions aroused. He hastened to the restaurant, but in spite of all his entreaties he was not allowed to cross the threshold, or even to send in a letter to Mirabeau. Full of anxiety, he waited for him till he came out and confided to him his fears. 'It is too late, my friend,' Mirabeau is said to have answered. 'The scoundrels are quite capable of it.' After a short talk with the Prince Mirabeau went to the house of Mademoiselle Coulon, an actress of the Opera. This was on March 26. The next day the fatal illness declared itself.

Many historians have cherished the belief that if Mirabeau had lived he might have stayed, delayed, or changed the course of the Revolution. Others, and among them his latest biographer, Von Holst, believe that he died at the right time for his reputation. In the discussion on the residence of public functionaries a short time before his death, he said that he was resolved to resist every kind of faction which should attempt to infringe the principles of the monarchy in whatever system it might exist, in whatever part of France it might show itself. But even if he had remained faithful to this principle, there were too many obstacles to render the success of his efforts probable. A revolution may be prevented, it may perhaps up to a certain point in its progress be arrested or guided; but even the genius of Mirabeau might have struggled ineffectually against the heavy

odds offered by an irresolute King, the mad partisans of the old order, the disorganisation of the army, the strong impulse which moved the mass of the people, the despotism of the clubs, and the license of the journalists. He was also an object of suspicion ; if his relations with the Court were known to some few, they were guessed at by very many. But he knew and lamented that the greatest obstacle in his way was his want of moral character. ‘What could I not have done,’ he said, ‘if I had the character of Malesherbes?’ Nature unfortunately rarely frames such marvels. The Cæsars, the Mirabeaus, the Napoleons seldom obey the morals of the porch or the creeds of the cloister.

It might be hard, if it were necessary, to define the religious opinions of Mirabeau. In his speeches he always spoke with respect of religion. A letter of his, to Romilly, written in London in March 1785 contains a general expression of his opinions on the immortality of the soul. If there was something pagan in his way of passing from the world, at least in his last illness he so far complied with appearances as to pass three-quarters of an hour alone with an ecclesiastic, Lamourette, the constitutional Bishop of Lyons, whose name, for another reason, remains in history. Mirabeau has been accused of ending his life, as he lived it, too dramatically. Talleyrand said of him that he dramatised his death. A French writer says of him that he died as a man dies on the stage ; he felt the presence of the people

about his house and he strove to give to his last hours a poetic majesty worthy of his audience. At least he nothing common did or mean upon that memorable scene, and he passed from the stage upon which he had played so great a part with the dignity of a Roman. 'Moralties not a few' may shriek out against him, did shriek out against him in his day, have shrieked out against him since. It is no more than just that the world should wish its great men to live greatly. But what is memorable in Mirabeau is not the theatrical side of his character, but the work he dreamed and the work he did; not his paganism but his patriotism; not the nights he gave to his dancing women but the days he gave to France.

The National Assembly resolved that the members should attend the funeral of Mirabeau. It was also decreed that the new church of Sainte-Geneviève, under the name of the Pantheon, should receive the mortal remains of great men who had died since the commencement of the epoch of liberty; and that Mirabeau should be interred there by the side of Descartes. On the pediment of the church were to be cut the words: 'To great Men, their grateful country.' All the public authorities of Paris and of the department, the National Assembly, the National Guard, and the various popular societies swelled the funeral pomp. The oration was pronounced in the church of Saint-Eustache. A discharge of firearms from twenty thousand National

Guards shattered all the windows, and seemed to shake the building to its foundation. It was late at night when the procession reached the church of Sainte-Geneviève by the light of torches. The remains of Mirabeau were carried to the grave with more than regal honours.

At the moment of Mirabeau's death only one voice was publicly raised in denunciation of the dead man whom all Paris united to honour. Death made no difference to the passions, put no bridle on the tongue, of Marat. He cried aloud his catalogue of accusations ; he exulted in the removal of an enemy ; he protested against the honour to be paid to Mirabeau's remains. ' If,' he said, in unconscious prophecy, ' if ever liberty were established in France, and if ever any legislature, remembering what I have done for my country, should be moved to accord me a place in Sainte-Geneviève, I protest, here and now, against the unforgivable affront.' Three years later the remains of Mirabeau were removed from the Pantheon to make way for the body of Marat.

But if Marat wrote bitterly of the dead man and bruited his words abroad, there were others who thought scarcely less bitterly, but who confided their opinions to their diaries or their correspondence. We can read two judgments expressed on Mirabeau's character, immediately upon his death—the one by an American, the other by an Englishman—which are interesting as examples of the signal failure of two able men to appreciate even distantly the genius of

Mirabeau and the greatness of his place in the history of his France.

Gouverneur Morris wrote on April 4, 1791 : ' It has been a prodigious fine day. The funeral of Mirabeau (attended, it is said, by more than one hundred thousand persons in solemn silence) has been an imposing spectacle. It is a vast tribute paid to superior talents, but no great incitement to virtuous deeds. Vices, both degrading and detestable, marked this extraordinary creature. Completely prostitute, he sacrificed everything to the whim of the moment. " Cupidus alieni, prodigus sui ; " venal, shameless, and yet greatly virtuous when pushed by a prevailing impulse, but never truly virtuous, because never under the steady control of reason nor the firm authority of principle, I have seen this man in the short space of two years, hissed, honoured, hated, mourned. Enthusiasm has just now presented him gigantic ; time and reflection will shrink that stature.'

Mr. Miles wrote to Lord Rodney from Paris in a letter which, curiously enough, is dated April 1, 1791, that he had just heard of the death of Mirabeau. ' If Mirabeau had been an honest man, or if he had possessed either virtuous pride or noble sentiments, he might by his talents and acquired knowledge have rendered his country most essential service ; but he was mercenary, though extravagant, and vain, vulgar, and mean, ready to sell himself to any party who thought him worth buying. I knew him personally. You may form some idea of him

when I inform you that he was an object of dread and contempt to all parties.' In another letter four days later to Mr. Somers Cocks he wrote : ' Thus has ended the life of a man who was at once the pride and infamy of his country and on whom her hopes of resurrection finally rested. In England his abilities would not have advanced him to a place of trust. Few men but what have virtues that atone for their vices—I speak of men in exalted situations ; he had none. Scenes of low debauchery marked his career through life, and with petty larceny among his vices he would have been excluded from good society.'

Other and wiser contemporaries have erred as greatly, as gravely. Lord Brougham, in one of the many attractive and eccentric pages that his omnivorous and would-be omniscient intelligence has devoted to the French Revolution, has pleased his fancy with some whimsical reflections on what might have been if Mirabeau had not died when he did. The might have beens, says Carlyle in effect, are for the most part a vanity, and Lord Brougham's singular speculations cannot be excepted from the rule. Lord Brougham thinks that, although Mirabeau died at forty-two, he lived in times when, as he finely phrases it, each week staggered under the load of events that had formerly made centuries to bend, and that he had thus lived long enough to show all that he could have attained if his life had been prolonged to the usual period. Had he perished a few weeks earlier, perhaps a few days, Brougham thinks

that some doubt might have existed over the course which awaited him had he survived, since his purchase by the Court was but just completed when he died, and his eagerness to be bought had made him precipitately hurry on the completion of the bargain. But of one thing Brougham cannot doubt, that in a few months, or possibly in a few weeks, Mirabeau would have become hateful to the people whose idol he was at his death, and that his whole influence, his character for patriotism, his reputation for political courage, even the fame of his talents, would have perished in attempting to earn the stipulated price and to save the Court to which he had sold himself after all but accomplishing its destruction. This judgment seems as hazardous as the information upon which it is founded is inaccurate. But it is the picture Brougham draws of the possibilities of Mirabeau's career, had Mirabeau lived, which most amazes and most amuses. It is probable, Brougham says, that he would have emigrated and lived obscure and penniless abroad. It is next to certain that had he remained in France he would have been among the first victims of the reign of terror. Here truly are a pair of astonishing prophecies. It is hard to say which is the more astounding. To picture Mirabeau under any conditions and in any exile as obscure is to display an extravagance of imagination belonging rather to burlesque than to history. Nor is it much more reasonable to assume that Mirabeau must certainly have fallen a victim to the

reign of terror. It is not certain that he could have saved the monarchy—so difficult an adventure was probably rendered impossible by the character of the monarch—but it is only reasonable to assume that the man who could dominate the Assembly and sway the Jacobins might have carried his head safe from the guillotine. It was Mirabeau's death that made Robespierre's opportunity. But it is as vain to combat as to frame such speculations ; it is enough that Mirabeau died, and that by his death France lost her greatest statesman.

To another of Mirabeau's contemporaries in England, to Hazlitt, Mirabeau was the alarm bell of the Revolution, the mouthpiece of the Assembly, the very model of a French orator. 'If he had been less of a mountebank or actor he would not have produced the effect he did. He caught with singular felicity and animation the feeling of the moment, and, giving it a tenfold impulse by his gesture, voice, and eye, sent it back with electrical force into the breasts of his audience. He seized the salient point of every question, saw the giddy fluctuation of opinion, and rushed in and turned it to his own advantage. By his boldness and promptitude he exercised a dictatorial power over the Assembly, and held them in subjection by a brilliant and startling succession of pointed appeals, as Robespierre afterwards did by the reiterated and gloomy monotony of his denunciations.' According to Hazlitt, Mirabeau bore a resemblance to the late Lord Chatham in his com-

manding tone and personal apostrophes, but with more theatrical display and rhetorical commonplace. Hazlitt thinks, as Von Holst thinks, that Mirabeau died just in time to save his popularity, or—and here Hazlitt partially agrees with Brougham—to prevent his becoming in all probability an abject and formidable deserter from the cause of the people. The author of ‘Waverley’ believed that had the Apostle of the Revolution—for so he terms Mirabeau—lived much longer he would either have averted its progress, or his dissevered limbs would have ornamented the pikes of those multitudes who as it was followed him to the grave with weapons trailed and howling and lamentation.

It is curious rather than important to read so many vain judgments, so many singular misconceptions. Mirabeau is known to the world now in all his greatness, and the faults which seemed so terrible to his contemporaries sink into insignificance beside the majesty of his genius. There is no need, as Lanfrey finely says, to undertake a rehabilitation of Mirabeau which Mirabeau would have himself disdained. Souls like his may be seen in all their nakedness, and their very vices need not fear the light, for they have at least a redeeming quality of grandeur. He was the greatest figure that the Revolution produced, the greatest man of his country and his time. It is unnecessary to speculate upon what he might have been ; it is enough to remember what he was.

CHAPTER LXXVIII

FLIGHT

VON SYBEL says that the first period of the Revolution closed with the death of Mirabeau. The phrase is approximately accurate. The death of Mirabeau marked the beginning of the end of the first period of the Revolution. The one supremely great man had gone from the scene ; the rest of the play was to be played for long enough by men of lesser power and smaller aims. The whole conditions of the struggle were changed. The men who believed that the Revolution was ended were right in a sense. The revolution that Mirabeau had helped to make was over and done with ; the revolution that Mirabeau might have helped to mar began to dawn with his death. Mirabeau's scheme for a constitutional monarchy supported by a parliamentary government and guided by a ministry chosen from the majority of the representatives of the people, the scheme to which he devoted all his energies, the scheme that might have made the French political system as stable as that of England, died with his death.

The folly of Blin and Lanjuinais was outstripped by the folly of Robespierre when he called upon the National Assembly to prohibit any deputy from undertaking the office of minister for the next four years. That and the self-denying ordinance which prohibited any member of the Constituent Assembly from being elected to its successor were errors great enough to account for many, if not for most, of the misfortunes that followed on their heels.

All the disturbances, all the disorders that had accompanied the dawn of the National Assembly now attended upon its sunset. The country, covered by the network and moved by the elaborate mechanism of the Jacobin clubs, grew daily more insubordinate to those who had been its leaders, more enthusiastic about men who had hitherto played at the best a secondary part in the business. The popular fury that in 1789 spent its rage against the castles and the owners of castles was now directed against the convents and the clergy. The Papal rejection of the civil constitution of the clergy was the pretext for anti-religious riots whose victims were the priests and nuns who served and the believers who dared to profess their ancient faith. In the name of liberty, the apostles of the new dispensation scourged, drowned, insulted, and menaced those who claimed the freedom to follow their own faith in their own way. All the brutalities of the war against parchments and privileges were renewed against the missal and the monastery. It

had been a crime to be a noble ; it was now a crime to be a priest.

This form of patriotism had become a kind of frenzy. A noble or a former noble was hardly looked upon as a man. The agents of the Revolution and of the counter-revolution were scouring the provinces, working towards one end by different means. The colonies were thrown in a blaze by the Declaration of the Rights of Man. The slaves felt that they, too, were men. The Assembly made experiments in emancipation which were excellently meant, but which unfortunately led, like so many of the experiments of the Assembly, to disastrous results for a time. Its decree that coloured persons who were born of free fathers and mothers should be eligible to the colonial Assemblies was followed by a letter from the members from the colonies to the Assembly saying that they thought it their duty to abstain from attending its sittings. Confusion reigned everywhere ; there was coherence nowhere. Louis might very well believe that the time had come about predicted so long ago by Fénelon, the time of a sudden and violent revolution which, instead of moderating the excessive power of the King, would destroy it irremediably. The walls of his prison were shrinking closer upon the captive, and his desire for escape grew greater.

After Mirabeau's death, Montmorin partially adopted Mirabeau's plan for releasing the King from his difficulties. The ideas of Montmorin

jumped with those of Bouillé. The Emperor was to make a demonstration which would serve as a pretext for collecting the French troops; the King was to put himself at the head of these troops, and then, according to Mirabeau's scheme, he was to summon the National Assembly to him and to modify the Constitution. Louis listened to Montmorin's advice, empowered him to make arrangements with the Ambassadors of Austria and Spain, and all the while kept secret the plan which he had really adopted. By this plan the King was to leave Paris secretly, to throw himself into some strong place which Bouillé should name, and there to take the necessary measures to restore tranquillity to the kingdom. If the King could not succeed in this enterprise with the assistance of his own troops, he was then to call in foreign aid. At all events, by thus putting himself at the head of this movement, he would force the emigrant princes to play a secondary part, and secure himself against the dependent position which he would be in if he recovered his authority by means of the emigrants alone.

One event intensified the King's sense of captivity. He wished to perform his Easter devotions at Saint-Cloud, and no secret was made of his intention to leave Paris for the purpose on April 18. But the intention aroused a fury of protest. The Cordeliers flamed out into a proclamation denouncing the King for sheltering and encouraging

refractory priests. The Cordeliers gave their hint and the hint was taken by the mob. When the 18th came and the King and Queen prepared to depart they found the Tuileries surrounded by a hostile multitude whom the presence of Bailly, the presence of Lafayette, wholly failed to restrain. The King and Queen entered their carriage, but they were permitted to do no more. The crowd closed about them menacingly, resolutely barring the way. There were National Guards present in plenty, but they could or would do nothing; and some even joined in swelling the volume of the cries against the King's departure. Lafayette begged the King to wait, declared that he was resolved not to give ground to riot, and vowed to clear a way by force. But it was easier to make the vow than to keep it. Lafayette was as powerless as Bailly, whose harangues had not the slightest effect upon the people. The King and Queen sat for two hours in the carriage, victims of insult, and at last, in despair, gave up the contest and returned to the palace.

The next day the King went to the Assembly by the advice of his ministers. He spoke in very moderate terms of the events of the preceding day. He said that it was for the interest of the nation that there should be no doubt about his personal liberty, and he declared that he still persisted in his intention to go to Saint-Cloud. He added that he had accepted and sanctioned the Constitution, of which

the civil constitution of the clergy was part, and that he would maintain it with all his power. The president in his reply said nothing about the journey to Saint-Cloud. In order to convince the people of the King's sincere attachment to the Constitution, Montmorin communicated to the Assembly an official copy of a circular letter to the French ambassadors at foreign courts. The letter stated that the King commissioned Montmorin to instruct each ambassador that it was his most particular pleasure that the ambassador should make known to the court at which he resided the open acceptance that his Majesty had given to the new form of government, and his irrevocable oath to maintain it. This panegyric on the Revolution by the King was received with the most lively enthusiasm by the Left and the galleries, and the reading was interrupted at every phrase by applause and cries of Long live the King! It seems strange that Louis should have condescended to order his minister to sign a document in which the report that he was not free was called an atrocious calumny, and so called by the man who could not even go a few miles from Paris when he wished. But Louis was never a tactful or a dexterous politician. As soon as this circular to the ambassadors was sent, with its panegyric of the Revolution and its denial of the King's captivity, secret agents were despatched to the sovereigns on whose aid Louis relied to explain the King's real meaning—a meaning which might,

perhaps, easily have been read between the lines of his letter. The foreign princes had only to imagine themselves in the place of Louis to understand what Louis felt and meant. He was angry and indignant at his captivity ; he was at his wits' end to get away ; he was undoubtedly prepared to countenance any duplicity, to accept any double-dealing which would serve to further his desire to escape. He may have thought that his treatment justified any deception on his part ; if he did, his action was as impolitic as it was unscrupulous. But he was in a most humiliating position, a king and no king, and he may well have longed for any pretext to leave Paris behind him.

Lafayette was humbled as much as the King, for his own National Guard had refused to obey him. He sent in his resignation ; and, though urged not to persist in his resolution, he did persist until it was proposed by one of the battalions, and agreed to by all, that every citizen soldier should swear upon his honour to obey the law, and that those who would not take the oath should be excluded from the National Guard. Upon this Lafayette resumed his command on April 25, and his first step was promptly to disarm, in conformity with a decree of the municipality, a company of grenadiers who had set the example of insubordination on the 18th. But the clubs were not disconcerted. The Cordeliers denounced the new oath which the National Guard had taken, and by a placard declared it to be unconstitutional ;

and they received among them a man who had been expelled from the National Guard for grossly insulting the King on the day of the intended journey to Saint-Cloud. After all the King did not go to Saint-Cloud, and he heard mass performed at his parish church by constitutional priests. He was a captive, and he knew it.

Lafayette was not alone among the leaders of the Revolution in feeling uneasy at the turn things were taking, and in dreading a decline of popularity. The bitterest opponents of Mirabeau began to realise soon after his death that his disappearance was not the end, but rather the beginning, of their difficulties. The two Lameths, Duport, and Barnave perceived that their domination of the popular movement was no longer to be unquestioned or undivided. Barnave's sense of insecurity had led him to attempt to enter into relations with Montmorin, and now Alexander Lameth sought to do the like. The desire to govern and to guide a ministry began to animate these leaders of the people, and the desire of the leaders vaguely guessed at by the led awakened distrust in the popular mind and a desire for newer chiefs of a purer democratic temper. Men began to suggest to each other that the true spirit of the Revolution was incarnated in the slender body and shone through the dim cold eyes of Robespierre. Robespierre had already assumed a new position in the Assembly; he seemed to push his way towards the vacant place of Mirabeau. He pitted himself

against Duport, and with success, in the debates on the constitution and composition of the Legislative Assembly that was to succeed to the Constituent Assembly. Duport was alarmed with the alarm that overtakes the professor of extreme opinions who finds himself faced by a champion of opinions more advanced. He professed to fear a social disorganisation, to be alarmed at a mania for simple principles whose effect would be to loosen all the springs of government. While he recognised that the Revolution was accomplished, he denied that in consequence liberty was not in danger, and he urged the unwisdom of having a completely new legislative body without experience and easily misled.

All these were strange words to come from Duport's lips, and they betrayed strange thoughts in Duport's mind. They were as unavailing in their aim as they were inappropriate to their speaker. If Mirabeau doubted his power to change the course of the Revolution, how could Duport hope to do the deed? Those who had denounced Mirabeau as reactionary, those who derided Lafayette as reactionary, were not likely to tolerate reaction in Duport. In all this debate Robespierre seemed to assert himself as the present rival, as the future master of Duport and the men who ranged with Duport. But if they were opposed in much, Robespierre and Duport agreed in speaking against the punishment of death. The speech of Robespierre is of interest with regard to his future career. He argued

that if the laws make human blood flow which they can ill spare and which they have no right to shed, if they exhibit to the eyes of the people scenes of cruelty and dead bodies mutilated by torture, then they destroy in the heart of the citizen the ideas of justice and injustice, and sow in the bosom of society the seeds of furious prejudices, which produce others in their turn. Man is no longer for man an object so sacred, society has a less elevated idea of his dignity, when the public authority sports with his life. On June 1 the Assembly decreed that the punishment of death should be retained, but that it should be simply a privation of life, without the addition of any torture, and should be effected by decapitation.

Robespierre had his own way in the matter of debarring the members of the Constituent Assembly from being elective to the Legislative Assembly, although, however, he declared himself in favour of the re-eligibility of members after the interval of one legislature. The debates were keen and hot, but they were not always bitter, not always mirthless. One of the proposed articles of organisation of the Legislative Assembly precisely asserted that the King should not have the power to dissolve the legislative body. A member of the Right said that he had a slight amendment to make in this article, which consisted simply in substituting for the words 'the King should not,' the words 'the King should.' This raised a laugh, but the article was voted without

discussion. The constitutional committee were hastening to the close of their labours. A decree of May 27 fixed the meeting of the primary assemblies between the 12th and the 25th of June, and that of the electors, who were to choose the members of the legislative body, for July 5.

The great object of the Jacobins was to influence the new elections. Robespierre was specially appointed by the Jacobin Club to draw up the instructions for the affiliated clubs. Three thousand copies of his paper were printed, and sent to the affiliated societies and to the sections of Paris. It was an exhortation to electors to attend punctually at the primary assemblies, and to vote for virtuous men and men of ability. If they could not find both qualities united, they were to vote for the virtuous man in preference to the man who had only ability. Those whom the electors were to distrust most were the men who were cruelly moderate, as these were more dangerous than the declared enemies of the Revolution.

At this very time the King made a desperate attempt to escape, the attempt which lives in history as the flight to Varennes. Few episodes in a story which is all contentious have caused more contentions than this attempt to escape. The tale is all a tangle which it has seemed impossible to get quite straight, or even partially disentangled. Writers have wrangled over it as fiercely, have disagreed as desperately, as over any of the many debateable

matters which make up the record of the French Revolution. The accounts of all the various persons who took part in the business in any way, and, taking part, have left any statement of their own case or of the case at large, clash irreconcilably, jar angrily, to the despair of their readers. Trying to understand the flight to Varennes is as desperate an enterprise as trying to understand the taking of the Bastille. The evidence is abundant, but exceedingly hard to put to profitable use. Carlyle's famous account is eminently picturesque, but also eminently inaccurate. The same inaccuracy without the same picturesqueness characterises most of the early French presentations. Alexander Dumas, amazed at the doubts and the discrepancies, took it upon himself to solve the one and smooth away the others by an adventure worthy of the author of 'The Three Musketeers.' The adventure was not upon the face of it ill advised or likely to prove fruitless. Dumas proposed to travel along the route of the royal fugitives, to follow the course of the journey day by day, hour by hour, and league by league, to test all traditions, and whenever possible to gain information from such survivors of the time, such contemporaries of the attempt, as might still live and look upon the earth in the days when the novelist made his ingenious experiment. The idea was certainly a good one, but its execution does not rank among the successes of the author of 'Monte Cristo.' The great French authority on the subject, Fournel, says drily that

Dumas only wrote one more romance where he thought he was writing a history.

It has been left to two writers of our own time to give in recent years the most luminous and the most accurate accounts of an event that has been involved in darkness and error. One writer belongs to England, the other belonged to France. The late Victor Fournel published in 1890 his admirable 'L'Événement de Varennes,' which was an amplification of earlier and elaborate studies of the subject. In 1892 Mr. Oscar Browning published 'The Flight to Varennes,' a clear and erudite narrative of the utmost value to the student of the theme. Carlyle's account will always remain one of the most fascinating of the many fascinating passages of his book, but it is worse than valueless as a description of what did happen, or as a critical treatment of such evidence as it was open to Carlyle to examine and to balance.

The idea of flight in some form or other had haunted the minds of the royal family, or of those who served the royal family, ever since the taking of the Bastille. Naturally, as ominous event succeeded to ominous event the thought grew stronger. It is needless to enumerate all the various schemes which were proposed, considered, and abandoned. Some of the plans urged the flight or even the abduction of the King. Others, and these by no means the least carefully thought out, only proposed to take measures for the flight of the Queen. The plan which Augeard

schemed, and which he actually submitted to Marie Antoinette, merely aimed at getting the Queen and her children out of the capital and out of France. His argument and the argument of those who aimed, as he aimed, at the evasion of the Queen was that not only was the Queen herself in great danger by reason of her unpopularity, but that her unpopularity added to the danger of the King. Augeard's plan resembled in many points the plan of flight that was finally adopted, even to the detail about dressing the Dauphin like a little girl. But Marie Antoinette refused to leave her husband, and thenceforward it was obvious that any plan of escape must include the King. The nature of Louis made the execution of any plan difficult in the extreme. He would and he would not ; if he was at odds with the Assembly he was all for flight, if things seemed to be going a little better he was all for staying where he was. He confessed to Fersen that he regretted not having gone while he was still at Versailles, and he even tried to argue that he was then willing to go but was prevented by the advice of Broglie, who, on the contrary, had from the first urged the King to go to Metz.

It has been said that the King was more willing to leave than the Queen ; that the Queen had to be won over after the King had decided upon flight in some form at some time. But this is scarcely to be believed. The King risked much by flight, even by successful flight ; the Queen risked very

little. Louis XVI. might very well lose his crown in crossing the frontiers, while Marie Antoinette would only find herself nearer to her native land, in safety, and in affectionate association with her own family. There was every reason for Marie Antoinette to wish to leave France, where she found only hatred, for Austria, where she could count upon love. It says much for her sense of her duty to her husband that she refused to gain all this at the price of leaving his side. She stayed to share his fate; she shared his fate in sharing his attempt to escape.

The death of Mirabeau and the insults of April 18 were probably the final causes which led the King to make up his mind to secret flight from Paris. It was characteristic of him that he should make up his mind when it was too late; that he should let slip opportunity after opportunity until the very moment when escape was most difficult, and when the incessant rumours of his desire to escape made him and his friends the objects of a persistent and suspicious watchfulness. But at least since the attempt to go to Saint-Cloud it seemed obvious abroad that the King was a helpless prisoner. While Louis was planning escape, kings and princes were planning his rescue. The Emperor Leopold had declared his intention to release Louis from his captivity by action with the other Powers. The Emperor's scheme was that troops were to assemble on the frontiers in July, but were to stay there, while a congress was held to regulate later

operations. The Emperor's advice to the King and Queen was not to think of attempting to recover their freedom themselves, but to increase their popularity, so that when the foreign armies approached the people might see that their only hope of safety was in the King's mediation.

But the King and Queen were resolved to hazard an escape. They had made up their minds at last : they had formed their final plan in co-operation with Bouillé, still in authority at Metz, though much harassed and hampered by the new war minister. Towards the end of May Louis sent word to Bouillé that he would leave Paris on June 19, a little after midnight. It was quite time to go if he was to go at all. Already rumours of the intended flight were blown about. Montmorin, who knew nothing of the plan nor of the counter-letters to the circular to the ambassadors, strongly denied that there was any truth in the rumours. In a letter to the Assembly he declared upon his responsibility and his honour that the project of escape attributed to the King had never existed ; and he stated that he had submitted his letter to the King, who had permitted, and even commanded him to address it to the Assembly. Lafayette had spoken to the King about the rumours, and the reply of Louis was so frank and positive that Lafayette declared he would answer with his head that the King would not go. Thus suspicions were lulled, and the King and Queen were able to proceed with their plans.

There were several momentous questions to settle. What disguise should they adopt? In what name should the passports be taken? What means of conveyance should they choose? What things should be taken with them? Who should accompany them? What measures should be adopted to cheat the watchfulness of their gaolers and escape from the Tuileries? The King resolved to make use of a passport which had been applied for and granted to the Baroness de Korff, a Russian lady, a friend of Fersen's. There is a certain mystery about this passport, and about the person it was obtained for. Forneron asserts in his '*Histoire des Émigrés*' that Madame de Korff did not exist, and that her name concealed the identity of a Mrs. Sullivan, then the mistress, and later the wife, of Mr. Quentin Crauford, who lived in the Rue de Clichy. Mrs. Sullivan was a great friend of Fersen's; she was devoted to the royal family. But it seems certain that there was a real Madame de Korff, and that the real Madame de Korff obtained the passport which the royal family used. She even obtained two passports by alleging that the first had been accidentally destroyed by fire. The passport mentioned the name of the Baroness de Korff as travelling with two children, a maid-servant and man-servant, and three men-servants. As for the conveyance, the King was determined that the royal family should all travel in a single coach made expressly for the purpose. He persisted in this

against the advice of Bouillé, who was all in favour of two fast, light English travelling carriages.

Fersen was entrusted with the duty of getting the coach ready for the flight. He arranged with the aid of Mr. Quentin Crauford and Mrs. Sullivan for the building of the new berline that was to carry the fugitives. Mr. Oscar Browning argues that it is quite erroneous to believe, as is commonly believed, that the carriage was a lumbering vehicle conspicuous by its form and splendour. It was a solid, well-built carriage, painted black and green, with the perch and the wheels the customary yellow. There was little out of the common about it; it looked fairly like an ordinary travelling coach. Not quite ordinary, however. It was very handsomely equipped, very richly furnished, far too heavily encumbered with appliances for adding to the comfort of the journey. It had cost nearly six thousand livres, a very large sum for the time. The description of all the appointments it contained suggests rather the furniture of a small yacht than the inevitable and essential appurtenances of a travelling carriage, the first object of which was secrecy and the second speed.

The goal that the King aimed at was Montmédy, but he resolved to reach it by way of Varennes, contrary to the advice of Bouillé. He also went counter to the advice of Bouillé when he insisted upon having military detachments placed at different points along the road beyond Châlons. Bouillé was strongly

opposed to this. He argued that if the detachments were small they would be of no use, and if they were large they would excite suspicion. He was conscious, too, in his heart that he could place but little trust in his troops. The war minister, Duportail, had done everything in his power to weaken Bouillé by obtaining the decree from the Assembly allowing the soldiers to frequent the clubs and absorb the new opinions. But Bouillé was obliged to yield on this point, and on yet another point. He wanted the King to take with him the Marquis d'Agoult, an energetic and much-travelled man, instead of Madame de Tourzel, the governess of the royal children. But Madame de Tourzel, according to Bouillé, insisted upon her right to accompany the Dauphin. Madame de Tourzel denies this, declares that she never knew of any such suggestion, that she went on the Queen's wish, and would, of course, have given way if the King or Queen had desired it. In any case, d'Agoult did not go. If his company really had been thought of vital importance, it is probable that he would have been asked to take the place of one of the three body-guards who did escort the King.

The three body-guards were named de Maldent, de Moustier, and de Valory. They had been chosen for the King by the Count d'Agout—who is not to be confounded with the Marquis d'Agoult—from among the body-guards who had been licensed after October 6, 1789. They were chosen chiefly

for their physical strength and for their capacity to endure long hours in the saddle. All three were tall men, de Maldent and de Moustier especially tall. The Chevalier de Coigny suggested that the King, instead of these guards, should be accompanied by men of mental rather than physical equipment, men capable in difficulties of taking a decisive course, men intimately familiar with all the roads. But the King decided on the body-guards, whom, at the time that they were chosen for him, he had never seen, though he received them before his departure. These guards were ordered to provide themselves with coats cut in the fashion of couriers, coats of a bright yellow lined with blue, a habit that scarcely seems calculated not to attract attention.

It was difficult, even impossible, to carry out these plans with absolute secrecy, without arousing any suspicion, even if the actions of those most immediately concerned had been governed by all imaginable discretion. But it cannot be said that their actions were so governed. In the first place the purpose of the royal pair was known to far too great a number of persons. In the beginning the King and Queen had intended that the knowledge of the attempt should only be given to two or three persons, to Bouillé, to Breteuil, to Fersen. But Fersen took the Baron de Taube into his confidence. De Mercy knew generally of the project. The Marquis de Bombelles seems to have been initiated at least by the beginning of June. The Emperor

Leopold II. was in the confidence of the Queen. Gustavus III., King of Sweden, knew something of the scheme from Breteuil and Fersen. D'Agoult knew of it. The Chevalier de Coigny knew of it. Naturally the soldiers who were to be especially concerned in the attempt knew of it, Goguelat and Choiseuil, who were to meet the King at Pont-Sommeville, d'Andoins, who was to meet the King at Sainte-Menehould, Damas, whose place of meeting was Clermont, young Bouillé, and young Raigecourt, who were to be ready for the King at Varennes. The Archbishop of Toulouse, M. de Fontanges, who was one of the most favoured counsellors of the Queen, knew of the desire, almost the determination to fly, even if he was not informed of the actual plan. Of those in the immediate service of the Queen, Madame Thibault and Madame Campan were fully informed. Many others must have formed shrewd suspicions of what was forward, from M. de la Borde, the Queen's valet de chambre, to her hair-dresser, Léonard, whom she had entrusted with her jewels to carry to Brussels. It is possible that the Count d'Agout, who chose the three body-guards, was partially initiated. It is probable that the body-guards were not initiated, but certain that they guessed, and guessing were rash enough to confide their impressions to others. Moustier breathed his belief into the ear of a woman named Preville. Valory blabbed to his mistress, who happened also to be the mistress of an extreme revolutionary. It is scarcely surprising if rumours buzzed abroad.

If friends were indiscreet, enemies were busy. The King and Queen were surrounded by spies and traitors. One of the Queen's most trusted women, who had been with her ever since her marriage, sent twice in the month of May, 1781, secret communications to Bailly, insisting that the Queen was making preparations for flight. Her name was Madame de Rochereuil; she was intimate with many of the deputies; de Gouvion, Lafayette's aide-de-camp, is said to have been her lover. It is asserted in her defence that she was foolish rather than evil; that she was only moved from her fidelity by the hostility of Madame Campan, who had contrived to turn the Queen against her, and that she died of grief and remorse. But it was not a single warning, nor the warning of a single person, that directed the attention of authority to the proposed flight. Warnings poured in from all directions. The royalist newspapers seem to have been scarcely less ready than the revolutionary sheets to predict the departure of the King. Several Jacobin journals predicted the intended escape more than a fortnight before it happened. Fréron, in the '*Orateur du Peuple*,' inspired by the statement of a woman, called upon the authorities to be on their guard. Escape was the theme of conversation in the Assembly; it was talked about abroad; it appears to have been spoken of in London by the Prince of Wales, who was the intimate friend of the Duke of Orleans, and Orleans himself seems to have known much about it.

There are those who go so far as to assert that both Lafayette and Bailly were not only well aware of the intended flight, but actually privy to its execution. The accusation would appear to be baseless. Even if they were rash in not paying a greater attention to the warnings, accusations, and denunciations which poured in upon them, it must be remembered that they had considerable justification for their inaction in the very multiplicity of the rumours. It was but a new version of the old fable of the shepherd who cried 'Wolf' too often. The popular Press had been so persistent for the past two years in announcing the immediate flight of the King while the King remained at the Tuileries that those in authority might well be excused if they had ceased to pay attention to predictions that were never justified. As a matter of fact, however, both Bailly and Lafayette did pay some attention to the latest whispers and warnings. On the 20th Bailly was so much disquieted by the increasing rumours that, as he was confined to his house by sickness, he sent for three municipal officers of the neighbourhood to confer with them. He sent also for Lafayette, communicated his suspicions to him, and begged him to go to the Tuileries and make sure that all was well there.

The assertions as to Lafayette's complicity are more persistent and more precise. Augéard distinctly avers that the Queen confided her intention to Lafayette and entreated him to shut his eyes to her

departure if he knew of it, and that Lafayette promised to do so. The Abbé Georgel, in his *Memoirs*, gives currency to the story that Marie Antoinette, finding it impossible to escape the vigilance of the General, took him into her confidence, buying his silence in the case of success, and undertaking not to say a single word that could compromise him in the case of failure. It was agreed between them, according to this story, that Lafayette was to let twelve or fifteen hours elapse before giving any warning of the flight. A darker suggestion is that Lafayette knew of the King's project, and allowed him to go only to catch him in a trap on his way ; but as the suggestion comes from Grace Elliott, it cannot be regarded as having any importance. Lafayette's own reply to all these accusations was that he and Bailly were the last two men in France to whom the Court would be willing to confide a project, the first effect of which, in the hopes and anticipations of the fugitives, would be the massacre of the Mayor and the Commander General. Lafayette concluded with the assertion that his personal character was his best defence. It is obvious that Lafayette had everything to lose and nothing to gain by the escape of the King. He was so much disliked by the King and Queen that it is hard to believe that they could have confided in him. As to the theory of his being bribed, one can only say, in the epigrammatic phrase of Fournel, that Lafayette was not a man to be

bought, and that if we may question his intelligence, we must recognise his honesty.

Whoever was or was not concerned in the flight, rumour was right for once, and the flight was about to take place. Fersen had made all his preparations in Paris. Bouillé had made all his preparations outside Paris, and had stationed the demanded detachments of soldiers at the various points along the road from Châlons to Montmédy. When it seemed necessary to allege any reason for the posting of troops, it was said that they were to act as escort for an expected treasure. In consequence of some suspicion of one of the Dauphin's waiting women, the date of the departure was changed from the 19th to the 20th of June. The day came and brought the appointed hour. The King and Queen were not to be the only fugitives that night. The King's brother, Monsieur, the Count de Provence, was for the road as well. He too was weary of Paris, he too sighed for the freedom of d'Artois, he too perhaps feared for his liberty, if not his life. All through the day of the 20th the King and Queen were much agitated. In the evening they were joined by Monsieur, who said them farewell. Provence had, it appears, intended to leave some time before, but postponed his departure when he learned of the King's plan lest his act should render the King's escape impossible. If he was so far brotherly, he had his reward. He succeeded in making his way across the frontier ; the

crown of France was yet for him. We have his narrative of his journey, an ignoble piece of work, chiefly occupied with his appetites and his meals. The two brothers never met again.

After Monsieur's departure the royal family supped, and supping talked till about eleven, when they went to their rooms and the usual formalities of the coucher. The Dauphin had been in bed since nine, and Madame Royale since ten. At eleven o'clock the Dauphin was wakened, was dressed like a little girl, and he and his sister, together with Madame de Tourzel, went through unfamiliar corridors to the apartments of the Duke de Villequier. De Villequier had emigrated; his rooms were unused, and in consequence the door on the courtyard was unfastened and unguarded. Hard by a hackney coach was waiting with Fersen on the box disguised as a coachman. Fersen drove off with the royal children and their governess, and waited at the Petit Carrousel for three-quarters of an hour. While they waited, Lafayette drove up, and entered the palace to attend the coucher of the King. Bailly had made Lafayette suspicious of attempted flight. Lafayette had taken, as he thought, all possible precautions to prevent it. He stayed talking with the King for some time. He saw nothing to justify his fears. He left and drove away again, the lights of his lamps gleaming in the darkness, the clatter of his escort jarring the stillness of the night. When he had gone the King affected

to go to bed, but as soon as he was alone he dressed himself in the disguise he had prepared, the dress of a valet, and left the Tuileries alone and unchallenged. In the meantime Madame Elizabeth had joined her nephew and niece at the Petit Carrousel. The King came soon after, and then there was an anxious pause before the arrival of the Queen. It seems that the body-guard who escorted her in her evasion from the palace was so ignorant of Paris that he did not know his way to the Petit Carrousel, and at the Queen's suggestion was directed by one of the horse-guards who was stationed near.

Fersen drove off at once, though for some reason, perhaps through want of knowledge of Paris, not by the shortest road. Outside the barrier the travelling carriage was ready. The King and Queen, the royal children, Madame de Tourzel, and M. de Maldent entered the berline. Fersen and M. de Moustier mounted the box. De Valory, the third body-guard, took horse and rode towards Bondy to prepare relays. Fersen's own coachman rode one of the four horses that drew the carriage. The empty coach was upset into a ditch, and the berline drove off at a rapid pace, for time had been lost; it was now two o'clock, and dawn was beginning to break. The fugitives reached Bondy in half an hour, and found relays ready. Fersen begged to be allowed to accompany the royal party, but the King unwisely refused, and Fersen

rode off, and made his way in safety to Mons. At the next post, Claye, the Queen was joined by two of her waiting-women who had been sent on before in a small carriage. In the broad daylight the party went on towards Meaux. The King loudly expressed his joy at escaping from Paris, his intention to play a different part henceforward, and his amusement at the awkward position Lafayette would find himself in when the escape was known. The Queen once more breathed freely and enjoyed the pleasing aspect of the country to which she had long been a stranger.

Michelet declares that the journey to Varennes was a miracle of imprudence, and that if all the memoirs were lost, it would be sufficient to consider well all that good sense required, and then to imagine the contrary, to be able to reconstruct the whole narrative. This statement is far too sweeping, but undoubtedly the royal party did many imprudent things. The body-guard in their bright yellow jackets were well adapted to attract attention. They had never travelled the road before, and they were unarmed. The large berline of the King was followed by another containing the Queen's women. The King was disguised like a valet, and yet he rode in the same carriage as Madame Tourzel, who acted the part of the Russian baroness: thus the servant and the mistress were sitting face to face. Though it was not likely that the King could be easily recognised in his disguise, he carelessly showed himself at the

carriage window, and thus lost the habit of taking due precaution. One of the body-guards was on horseback at the carriage door, another sat on the box, and Valory rode on to order the horses. He is said to have paid the postilions royally, giving them a crown apiece for drinking-money, which was what only the King gave. At Montmirail, a small town between Meaux and Châlons, an accident happened to the harness, and it took an hour or more to repair it. The journey was resumed and everything promised success: the relays of horses were punctually in readiness, and few people were seen on the road. Châlons was the only large town which the royal fugitives had to pass through, and on reaching it they were about one hundred miles from Paris by the road. At Châlons the postmaster is said to have recognised the King, but without showing the slightest emotion he himself assisted in putting the horses to the carriages, and got the postilions off as quickly as he could. The royal family quitted Châlons, and the King, the Queen, and his sister simultaneously exclaimed, 'Now we are safe!' The next relay of horses was at Pont-Sommeville, where, according to the orders of Bouillé, troops were to be waiting—forty Lauzun Hussars, under the command of Goguelat. Goguelat had been sent by the King and Queen to Bouillé. Bouillé sent him to meet the fugitives at Pont-Sommeville. On the Monday Goguelat took forty Lauzun Hussars from Varennes, passed the night at

Sainte-Menehould, and rode the next morning to Pont-Sommeville, where he was to be joined by the young Duke de Choiseul. Choiseul had set out from Paris on the same evening as the royal family, but some time before them. He took with him as his companion Léonard, the Queen's hair-dresser, whom the Queen had entrusted with her jewels, and to whom, on the journey, Choiseul confided the purpose of the night. Too much depended on these two men, Goguelat and Choiseul. Goguelat was a somewhat extraordinary man, for whom the royal family had a great regard. He was vehement, energetic, of a heavy temper, of a choleric disposition, almost a brawler. He had made himself a kind of fame by deliberately insulting the Duke of Orleans in the apartments of the King at a time when to insult Orleans was to show special proof of devotion to the royal cause. He had made himself conspicuous by his ostentatious contempt for the deputies of the Third Estate in the opening days of the National Assembly. He had been entrusted with several secret missions. The Queen was convinced of his devotion ; he was looked upon as a sure man. He seemed the type of a brave and daring soldier ; he proved to be the reed painted like the bar of iron. It has been said of him that of all the blunderers in a big blunder none was so bad as he. He disobeyed the most important orders that were given to him, and did badly everything that was left to his discretion. The young Duke de

Choiseul was not of much better temper. Frivolous, hasty, impatient, undecided, he was by no means the man to face grave emergency with success, or rise to the height of a great crisis.

When the berline arrived at Pont-Sommeville, which was not a town but merely a posting station, to the astonishment of the travellers no troops were to be seen. This was the first of the swift succession of misfortunes. The arrangements made for the posting of troops had been hopelessly bungled. Bouillé seems to have laid his plans with care and discretion, but both Goguelat and Choiseul blundered badly. Owing to the delay at the beginning of the enterprise, the royal berline did not arrive at Pont-Sommeville at the time appointed—a time, as it would appear, which it would have been difficult to have kept even if there had been no delay of any kind. Choiseul lost his head. Instead of waiting, as he ought to have waited, for the arrival of Valory, the King's courier, he drew off his men by bye-roads on the way to Varennes, to avoid, as he professed, a collision with the people, and sent Léonard, the Queen's hair-dresser, on the road where the detachments were placed, with the fatal message that he feared the travellers would not pass that day. The troops had arrived at their posts at the appointed hour, had lingered long enough to arouse suspicion and something more than suspicion, only to be withdrawn from fear of provoking open hostility just at the time

when their continued presence might have been of service.

The gloom and alarm which fell upon the fugitives when they found no troops at Pont-Sommevelle deepened when the next stage, Oberval, proved equally unprepared. But the first distinct threat of danger came at the next halt. While it was still quite light the royal berline reached Sainte-Menehould, and found it in a highly excited condition. Sainte-Menehould was a patriotic town; its patriotism was inflammable, irritable. It had been fiercely irritated by the passage through the town of Goguelat and his forty Lauzun Hussars on their way to Pont-Sommevelle. It was considerably excited by the arrival of thirty-three Dragoons under Captain d'Andoins, who were drawn up in the great square. To d'Andoins came in course of time Léonard with Choiseul's fatal message, which he delivered, and drove on to deliver elsewhere. D'Andoins seems to have been a weak man, anxious to save himself, fearful of any conflict with the people. He rebuked his subordinate Lagache for sounding the assembly and bringing the Dragoons together, and he ordered the horses to be unsaddled. The order was not an hour old when the berline drove into the town and drew up at the post-house.

At any time the arrival of so important a travelling carriage would have roused some interest, gained some attention, at a town like Sainte-Mene-

hould. But the town was alive, excited, agitated by the passage of the Hussars, by the presence of the Dragoons. Already at midday the newly formed National Guard were armed by the mayor with the three hundred muskets that had been sent from Châlons for the purpose, and it was decided that they should mount guard every evening at eight o'clock. Valory states that Sainte-Menehould was the first town where he saw National Guards in uniform. When the royal berline rolled into the town Sainte-Menehould was, as it were, in possession of two armed forces, the Dragoons of d'Andoins and the local National Guard, the two forces suspicious of, if not actually opposed to, each other. The King was, naturally, already agitated by the absence of the detachments of soldiers he had expected. D'Andoins was agitated by the danger of the situation. He whispered to the royal party that their plans were badly laid, and that he would go away to avoid suspicion. But suspicion was roused whether d'Andoins would or no. As fresh horses were being put to, the postmaster, Jean Baptiste Drouet, came up, fresh from work in his field. Part of his twenty-eight years had been passed in the Condé Dragoons and the ex-soldier had seen the Queen at Versailles and thought he recognised her. At this moment the King incautiously put his head out of the window, and Drouet thought he recognised him too. To make sure he compared the King's face with his picture in little on the assignat with which Valory

had just paid for the fresh horses. Drouet was convinced. The carriage contained the King. The same opinion seems to have entered the minds of other spectators. As the carriage, with its anxious occupants, wheeled away it left behind a rapidly growing belief that it carried the King, that it carried the Queen, of France.

Ex-dragon Drouet was a man of decided mind—of decided action. He was then in his political opinions what may be called a constitutional royalist, but his devotion to the constitution was stronger than his devotion to the monarchy. It seemed unconstitutional to him that the King of France should presume to leave his country ; he was of a mind with those who would act against the King in the King's name. He made his suspicions known to the Town Council, and seems to have so acted upon and animated that body as to make them charge him with the mission to pursue and arrest the King. Drouet was a large, strong man ; he was naturally a good rider in his double capacity of dragoon and postmaster. He made ready to start. Twenty men were eager to accompany him, but there were only two horses available in the stables. He chose, or had chosen for him, as companion a man named Guillaume, known in the neighbourhood as Guillaume de la Hure, and whom an absurd legend identified later with Billaud Varennes. The two men flung themselves upon their horses and galloped hard after the carriage, which was by this time far ahead.

Meanwhile the little town was in a mad uproar. People shrieked aloud in the streets to each other that the carriage must be stopped. From every street armed men rushed to the common centre of the market place. The bells rang, the drums of the National Guard beat the general ; Sainte-Menehould was aflame with patriotism, furious with noise. D'Andoins, the incapable, had by this time managed to get his Dragoons' horses re-saddled, and made a show of doing something when it was too late to do anything. A stout man might have done something, but d'Andoins was not a stout man. His Dragoons, who were hungry, showed no desire to follow him without first having food and drink ; the National Guard gathered about him and barred his way ; he was forced to the Town Hall, where he desperately tried to explain that he knew nothing about the coming of the King and Queen, but was only acting as escort to an expected treasure. He was commanded to disarm his men, and obeyed the command ; a little later he was flung into prison, roughly handled, and kept in confinement and some risk of his life for five days. After this he was sent to Châlons, and so drops out of the saga.

It is agreeable to find that there was one brave man on the side of the King that day in Sainte-Menehould. Quartermaster Lagache, who had acted wisely and well before in calling out the Dragoons, acted wisely and well now. He thought it would be wise and well to carry the tidings of

what had happened to the Count de Damas at Clermont. With his bridle rein between his teeth, with a pistol in each hand, he spurred his way through the crowd that tried to stop him, firing one pistol as he rode and receiving some slight wounds. The sight of his other pistol was enough to scare into the river a man who tried to stop him on the bridge leading to the wood. Once out of the town and on the height, Lagache saw before him a horseman furiously riding. Lagache imagined that he must be in pursuit of the King. He urged his own horse to overtake him, and was gaining fast when the leading rider turned to the left into the woods. Though Lagache rode up as swiftly as he could, he lost sight of him among the trees. It is just possible that the man pursued by Lagache was Drouet, if, as some believe, Drouet, though he rode away with Guillaume, parted company with him outside Sainte-Menehould, Drouet keeping one road to Clermont and Guillaume riding by another route. In any case Lagache had to abandon the chase, and he urged on his horse to make his way to Clermont, where he arrived, according to his own account, at night on to eleven o'clock. He lost another half-hour before he could get to see Count de Damas. Count de Damas, without telling Lagache that the royal carriages had already passed, sent him on to the village of Auzeville with the order to Captain Saint-Didier to march the Dragoons camped there as quickly as possible on the road to Varennes. When Lagache

succeeded in waking Saint-Didier from his sleep, the attempt to assemble the men aroused the inhabitants of Auzeville. These could hear the sound of the tocsin at Clermont, could even hear the sound of the beating of the general. They opposed the departure of the Dragoons. Captain Saint-Didier proved another weak link in the chain of soldiers. Undecided, spiritless, he obeyed the order of the municipality of Clermont to remain where he was. Lagache had done his best; had played a brave part; he lived to serve the first Napoleon and to become General Henry, and his name abides in honour on the Arch of Triumph.

In the meantime, Drouet and Guillaume rode through the night in pursuit of the royal carriage, and the royal carriage carried through the night aching hearts and agitated minds. The absence of troops at the points where they had been expected, the ominous words of d'Andoins, had combined to heap anxieties upon the royal party, anxieties that were only to be increased upon arriving in Clermont. Though they reached Clermont without inconvenience, bad news met them on their arrival. Count Charles de Damas came to them and told them that there was considerable excitement in the district, and that it would be impossible for him to march his regiment and escort the King's carriage. He did, indeed, make an attempt, which was unsuccessful. The authorities joined the inhabitants in preventing the regiment from leaving the town,

and the troops refused to obey Damas. He was tempted to induce them by telling them that they were going to escort the King and his family, but he feared to meet with a refusal that would lead to the arrest of the King. Such at least was the excuse offered for the absence of an escort at Clermont. Fresh horses were harnessed, and the berline went once more upon its journey. The heavy hearts were heavier now ; danger seemed to be closing in upon them as every stage of the journey destroyed a hope and added a terror to the course. Damas, as soon as the berline left, sent off an officer at all speed to ride to Varennes and warn Bouillé and Raigecourt that the King was coming. But unmerciful disaster followed fast upon the flying king. The officer sent by Damas was not well acquainted with the country. He took the road to Verdun in mistake for the road to Varennes, and only reached Verdun after two hours' hard riding to find out his mistake when it was too late. Damas himself escaped with difficulty from Clermont with a few officers, and rode in the King's track.

In the meantime Drouet and Guillaume, dogging the King's course, came to Clermont. It was a mere chance that prevented them from making the same mistake as Damas' messenger, and taking the road to Verdun. But the mere chance turned against the King. Outside Clermont, Drouet and his companion met the postilions of the previous stage who were returning to Sainte-Menehould. The postilions

had heard the order, rashly and loudly given, to their successors to drive to Varennes. They told this to Drouet and Guillaume, and Drouet and Guillaume, who but for this information would have turned their horses' heads in the direction of Verdun, rode on towards Varennes. Drouet's own narrative does not mention this. The municipality of Clermont on their own part sent two couriers to Varennes to stop the suspected carriages, which were now going towards the little township that their arrival was to make immortal.

No narrator of the story of the flight to Varennes, not even M. Fournel, not even Mr. Oscar Browning, knew or could have known that the King left his best chance of safety behind him in leaving Clermont. The memoirs of Norvins make this clear. Norvins himself emigrated about a fortnight after the royal flight. He followed the same course as the royal family. It even gave him a shudder of horror to think that the horse he was given at Sainte-Menehould, a swift rider, might have been the very animal that carried Drouet on his famous pursuit. When in his time and turn he came to Clermont, he had some speech with the postmaster there. He noticed that this postmaster still wore the royal uniform, abandoned at Sainte-Menehould and elsewhere, and was the more inclined for talk. The postmaster showed him his two sons, tall handsome young men, who were both about to set out to join the army of Coblenz, where

the father said he hoped to join them. Then he pointed out to his guest that his garden gave on to the opening woods of the Forest of Ardennes. If the King's carriage had been brought into his courtyard he would have harnessed the relays, the carriage could have crossed the garden, and been swallowed up in the forest, every path of which was known by heart to the postmaster and his sons, who could have guided the King to Montmédy or even to Luxembourg. The postmaster declared that he recognised the King, but did not dare to address him. He added that if Drouet, instead of taking a cross-country way to Varennes, had ridden by his doorway, his suspicions would have been aroused, he would have spoken to the King, begged him to enter the house, and guided him in safety to his destination. On so small a chance the fate of the King and of the kingdom depended.

CHAPTER LXXIX

VARENNES

VARENNES is a small town of about one thousand five hundred inhabitants, on the river Aire, which divides it into two almost equal parts. On the left bank what was called the high town rose in an amphitheatre, a collection of steep and narrow streets, in the midst of which the street of the Château and the street of the Basse-Cour descended from the entrance of the town on the Clermont side to the one little bridge which spanned the river, and led to the low town. In 1791 Varennes was very much as it is now. In the upper town there are two open places ; the first is the Place du Château, commonly called the Place Verte, where the old seignorial castle once stood. This Place in 1791 was occupied by the tribunal of the bailiwick, the prisons, and the ruins of the old castle. A little further on is the second, the Place du Marché, where there was a cemetery and the church of Saint-Gengoult. Saint-Gengoult is much worshipped in the regions of the Meuse and the Moselle. He lived in the eighth century, and had a wicked wife who was false to him and who killed him. Hroswitha has written his life in Latin verses.

The bell tower of the church on the side of the street of the Basse-Cour rested upon a low arch some fifty feet long, closed by two doors. This archway was the only passage for carriages. On the other side of the little bridge the low town had in 1791 only one square towards the end of the town, partially occupied by a bakehouse and public wine-presses, on the spot where the church now stands. The level of this square was lower than it is now, and a large gutter where the rainwaters accumulated formed a sort of marsh peopled with frogs and toads. Local historians have indeed been found bold enough, as it would seem, to find in this circumstance confirmation of their theory that the etymology of Varennes is to be found in 'Vallis Ranarum,' 'Valley of Frogs.' At the angle of the square nearest the bridge, and opposite the spot where the church now is, stood the Hôtel du Grand Monarque. At this inn the relays were stabled; at this inn young Charles de Bouillé and young Raigecourt waited for the coming of the King. Varennes was not a post town, so no horses were kept there, but it had been arranged that fresh horses should be ready for the King at the end of the town nearest to Clermont. This arrangement had been altered by the colossal blunderer, Goguelat, who decided that the relays should remain where they had first been brought, at the Grand Monarque. This fatal blunder practically took the last hope from a now almost hopeless enterprise.

Up to the night of June 21, 1791, Varennes had played no great part in history. It had accepted the new revolutionary ideas, had dismissed its parish priest for refusing to take the oath, and had some trouble with other non-juring priests and nuns. But it was peaceful enough under its procureur, Sauce, a respectable local grocer who acted as lieutenant to the mayor, George, who had been elected deputy for the district to the National Assembly. It had been somewhat agitated by the massing and marching of troops, by the rumours of massing and marching elsewhere, by the talk of the treasure the troops were assembled to escort, by rumours of a speedy Austrian attack on the frontier. On the 21st the second son of the Marquis de Bouillé, captain of the Hussars of Esterhazy, and the Count de Raigecourt, captain of the regiment of Royal Allemand, came to Varennes, and put up at the Hôtel du Grand Monarque, alleging as excuse for their presence that they were awaiting the arrival of their general, the Duke de Choiseul. In consequence of the changes in the dispositions of the troops ordered by Goguelat, there were only in Varennes sixty soldiers commanded by young Lieutenant Rohrig. While Bouillé and Raigecourt were waiting anxiously, Léonard drove up with the ill news that he had carried so scrupulously all along the route. Having done his worst, Léonard drove off in the direction of Verdun by mistake, and did not get to Stenay, where Bouillé was and where his tidings might have proved of service, until it was too late.

Sick at heart for the bad news, conscious that they were objects of suspicion in the town, not knowing what to do and what to leave undone, Bouillé and Raigecourt pretended to go to bed, but really sat in the darkness at the open window of their room, waiting, watching, and wondering what was going to happen. Many things were already happening. At a little after eleven a small party of young men were about to leave the inn of the Bras d'Or kept by Jean Leblanc in the upper town near to the archway in the bell tower. Suddenly there was a noise as of riders riding fast; the door was thrown open, and Drouet entered hurriedly. He took Leblanc aside and asked him if he was a good patriot. Leblanc answered that he was, whereupon Drouet told him of the approach of the King and called upon him to arouse the town. In a moment those present, all excellent patriots on the testimony of Leblanc, made haste to act. Leblanc went to the house of Sauce to rouse and warn him. Drouet and others hastened to the bridge to block it at both ends with overturned waggons. Sauce's children went through the town spreading the alarm of fire. Some of the Hussars tumbling out at the alarm, unarmed and in confusion, were cleverly handled by Roland Drouet, the Major of the National Guard, who gave them wine, harangued them, and left them in charge of others commissioned to watch them and to win them over, which was not difficult. Varennes was a well-set trap, and its victims were close at hand.

Valory, the King's courier, reached Varennes near midnight, and expected to find horses on the heights and in advance of Varennes, according to the arrangement; but there were no horses. Goguelat, having left the relay of horses on the other side of Varennes, had forgotten to warn the King of this change in the plan. Louis had an excellent memory, and told Valory to look for the horses at the place which had been agreed on. Valory, finding no horses, made his way into Varennes, and groped about in the dark, knocking at the doors, and trying to wake somebody. When the King's carriage reached the heights at the entrance of Varennes, the first thing its occupants heard was that no horses could be seen.

The King and Queen got out of the carriage to make inquiry. The Queen, escorted by de Malden, knocked at the door of a large house in the first square, occupied by M. de Préfontaine, a knight of Saint-Louis and agent for the Condé estates. He was in bad health, knew nothing of what was happening in the town, and could give the Queen no information. While the Queen was within, two men on horseback passed rapidly, and one of them called out to the postilions: 'I forbid you in the name of the nation to go on; you are carrying the King.' This was possibly Drouet, hurrying into the town and making straight for the Bras d'Or; or it may have been one of the messengers from Clermont.

In the meantime Valory and Moustier returned from a vain search for the horses, having looked in every place but the right place, as they never thought of crossing the bridge. The King immediately told Valory that he thought they were betrayed. Just then the Queen came out of the house with M. de Préfontaine. Madame Royale, in her short account of the flight, seems to regard M. de Préfontaine as a spy of Lafayette's, and Moustier reproaches him for his cowardice in doing nothing. But Valory, on the other hand, commends him, and declares that the King might have been saved if M. de Préfontaine had been trusted. The episode is obscure ; whatever M. de Préfontaine might have done, he does not seem to have done anything. His descendants, in 1865, brought an action against Alexander Dumas, whom they accused of wronging their ancestor in his book on Varennes.

In the face of the danger that menaced the travellers the only thing to be done was to go on again as quickly as possible. But the postilions refused to stir. They declared that their horses were tired, that Canitrot, their master at Clermont, had told them to go no further than the entrance to Varennes, that Madame Canitrot had insisted on their return, as they were wanted for the hay harvest the next day. Mr. Oscar Browning says that Madame Canitrot never forgave herself for the part she unwittingly played in stopping the King. The

body-guards offered bribes in vain, and at last only by threatening them with hunting knives induced them to go slowly on. But thirty-five minutes had been lost. Later on these postilions claimed a reward from a grateful country on the ground that they had caused this delay of deliberate purpose, and that they were therefore largely responsible for the failure of the flight. Their names were Nicholas Renaud, Bardin, and Arnould.

The town gate was half closed, and there were a few armed men there. When the King's carriage came, the passport was demanded by the Commandant of the National Guard and the Procureur of the Commune, who put the light into the carriage right in the King's face. Sauce asked for the passport, and observed that, though signed by the King, it was not countersigned by the President of the National Assembly. There was no reason why the passport should have been thus countersigned, but the pretext served. Sauce insisted that the party must wait till daybreak. The party protested in vain. The armed men who barred the way of the carriage levelled their guns and threatened to fire if any attempt were made to proceed. There was nothing for it but to yield to Sauce's request that the party should take shelter in his house, which was only a few steps off, so the three women, the two children, and the King entered the shop. It was soon plain that their identity was known to Sauce and the others. It was indeed vain for the King to deny

himself ; both he and the Queen were recognised by their features. The last doubt was removed by the arrival of Destez, the principal judge of the place, who knew the King by sight. Destez promptly and respectfully recognised Louis. Louis then admitted that he was the King, and said that his life was in danger in Paris. The bell of Varennes was now giving tongue, and the bells of all the villages hard by responded. The darkness of the night was everywhere starred with lights : all the country-side was aroused : all the country-side was flocking to Varennes. An angry crowd raged round the shop, even forced its way into the shop, uttering imprecations against the King, who was going to desert them. There is a tradition that when Louis declared that he had no intention of going beyond the frontier, a bandy-legged cripple cried out that he did not believe the King. Sauce maintained an attitude of respect, and said that as the municipality had in truth the honour of having the King among them, they wished to ask for his orders. Louis naturally replied that his orders were to put the horses to the carriages, and to allow him to continue his journey. The municipals affected a willingness to obey, but asked the King to wait till daybreak, and to permit himself to be accompanied by a detachment of the National Guard. The King consented ; there was really nothing else to do. He hoped that in the morning he should be allowed to go.

Thus was the majesty of France, clad in the mean livery of a lackey, a captive in a squalid grocer's shop rank with an unbearable stench of tallow. There were two rooms on Sauce's upper floor reached by a narrow corkscrew staircase from the shop. In the back room, looking on to a small courtyard, the royal party were assembled. The King seated himself in an armchair in the middle of the room. Marie Antoinette sat apart in the farthest corner of the room, with her veil lowered. The Dauphin and his sister, weary with travelling, dazed by this midnight delay, were put to bed and soon fell asleep, the happiest for the moment of that most unhappy company. Madame de Tourzel sat at their bedside. The three body-guards sat on a bench underneath the window.

Even then, at that eleventh hour, there was a chance to save the King, a chance to save the monarchy. Out of the darkness armed men came to Varennes, men who had been riding desperately in the King's wake from the various points of failure along the road. It was Choiseul, with his handful of men ; it was Goguelat, with his handful of men ; it was Damas, with his five or six men, who now galloped, hot on each others' heels, to the top of the little town. There were cannon at the top of the little town, rusty, ludicrous, not even loaded according to Drouet, cannon made of wood according to another witness. There were armed men behind these grotesque emblems who bade the rescuers

halt. Choiseul held some brief parley, and then, as if inspired by the sudden reinforcement supplied by the arrival of the heady, tempestuous Goguelat, brushed the semblance of opposition aside and rode into the little town. On his way he met Sauce, who seems to have addressed the troop of horse, telling them of the arrest of the King and appealing to their patriotism. It is probable that Sauce's words, however winged, were wasted, as Choiseul's soldiers were for the most part German, and knew no syllable of all that the procureur grocer was saying to them. Choiseul rode right on past the house of Sauce, where the prisoners were, till he came to the quarter where he expected to find the sixty Hussars under the command of Rohrig. He found neither Hussars nor Rohrig. For the Hussars had been corrupted by the people ; they were dissipated here and there in the town ; hardly a man was in quarters. As for Rohrig, young, inexperienced, uncertain, at his wits' end what to do, he had mounted horse and ridden out into the darkness, thinking that there was nothing for him to do in Varennes, hoping that there might be something for him to do elsewhere, if by good fortune he should carry to Bouillé the news of that night's work. The same despair, the same hope, seems to have dominated the young Bouillé and the young Raigecourt, waiting at their darkened window in the lower town. They heard the waxing noise of tumult, they saw the growing lines of light, they knew something had happened ;

they did not know what had happened. At least they knew that they could do nothing in the town, they two against so many; they dreamed that they might be of some use if they rode to where Bouillé lay. It was hard for them to leave the town, but with the help of a gallant bearing they did leave it, carrying most of the relays with them; and so they, too, rode off into the night, as Rohrig had ridden.

But, however much Rohrig may be excused in his place, and Bouillé and Raigecourt in their place, the fact remains that when Choiseul clattered in and looked for a garrison he found emptiness and nothingness. He may have been feather-headed, he may have been foolish, but at least in that hour he behaved like a gallant gentleman. He had but some poor forty men with him. He made them a stirring speech; told them that their King and Queen were in peril, asked if they would fight, and, if need were, die for that King, that Queen. The soldiers were for the most part German soldiers; the Queen was, perhaps, something to them if the King were little. They are said to have shouted hoarsely the names of both King and Queen in their guttural speech; they seemed to be ready to follow Choiseul wherever he chose to lead them. Choiseul did lead them to the house of Sauce, and drew them up in solemn formal battle array before the house of the grocer and tallow-chandler who was also Procureur of Varennes. The forty men had the support

of the few whom Goguelat, the few whom Damas, had brought with them.

With some difficulty Choiseul and Goguelat forced their way through the crowd that hung about the house of Sauce, forced their way up the corkscrew staircase, forced their way through the outer room on the upper floor, where a pack of peasants with pitchforks tried to bar their passage, forced their way into the little backroom where all that was left of the royalty of France sat helplessly huddled together. There was the King in his valet's dress; there was the Queen with her lowered veil; there were the two children of the line of Capet fast asleep; there was Madame Elizabeth, grave and patient. Choiseul had the heart and the hopes of a gentleman. He was hot for it that all the royal family should take horse at once and ride for good or evil through the crowd, trusting to Saint-Louis and the swords of the soldiers to force a passage. It was the thought of a madman, the suggestion of a sage. If it had been done the fate of France might have changed. But the King faltered, as he always faltered; he never could follow any brave advice. He fubbed the proposal off with the argument that he might be willing to run the risk alone, but that he could not risk the safety of the Queen, his sister, and his children with so feeble a protection. He also urged that the municipality had not refused to let him go, but merely had requested that he would wait till daybreak.

The only policy of this unhappy, unlucky

gentleman in all this unhappy, unlucky business was wait, wait, wait. Was not Bouillé at Stenay, some nine leagues only away? Would he not hasten to Varennes at full speed, and overawe a disloyal peasantry with the sight of a loyal soldiery? Would not all be well? With talk like this Louis chilled the zeal of Choiseul, of Damas, of Goguelat. If he could only for once just have carried himself like a king, he might have ridden with his gallant captains and his forty odd men scot free out of Varennes, or, at least, have died like a gentleman, his drawn sword redeeming his servile dress. But he waited, as he had always waited, delayed as he had always delayed, was then, as ever, unkingly, and with every moment the peril grew, the crowd of hostile peasantry increased, the chances of escape dwindled. A bewildered municipality, driven to its wits' end by the noise of the crowd and the insistence of Drouet, sent at last a deputation to Louis to say that the people were opposed to his journey and insisted on his return to Paris. The only hope left was in Bouillé.

But it was obvious that when Bouillé came the lives of the royal family would be in peril. Choiseul and Goguelat formed their plan to protect them. They would clear the crowd out of the upper rooms in which the royal family were. The three body-guards would defend these rooms. On the narrow corkscrew staircase, where but one man could mount at a time, Choiseul, Goguelat, and five other faithful men of the sword would station them-

selves, step on step, and hold it until they were all killed, one after another, giving their lives gladly if in the gift they could hold the place long enough to allow Bouillé's troops time to reach the town, clear the street, and seize the house.

In the meantime there was no news of Bouillé, and the crowd of peasants had swelled to several thousands. The Commandant of the National Guard of Neuilly, M. de Signemont, a knight of Saint-Louis, directed all the operations against his King with a military skill and foresight which made Goguelat despair. For Goguelat went out of Sauce's house to see the state of affairs, and found them black enough. Though his troopers still obeyed him, they were but few against so many. Drouet was here, there, and everywhere, always opposing him, always swearing that he should not carry off the King alive. Goguelat tried to clear away the crowd from the King's carriage. Roland Drouet, of the National Guard, interfered, threatened to arrest Goguelat. Goguelat, exasperated, drew his sword; Roland Drouet drew his pistol, fired, and wounded Goguelat, whose horse reared and threw his rider. Goguelat was carried into the Bras d'Or, where his wound was looked to. The game was up. Choiseul, hurriedly coming down the stairs to learn the meaning of the shot, found Roland Drouet the hero of the hour and hurried back to tranquillise the King with some fictitious tale and to tell the true thing to the Queen. In the meantime the Hussars

went over to the enemy. The people had been plying them with wine ; they saw one of their leaders shot ; they were overawed by the mass of armed men about them ; they declared that they would do whatever they were told, and asked for an officer of the National Guard to command them. 'The Hussars behaved like angels' wrote a young patriot lady of Varennes to her mother the next day.

The King showed himself at the window, a king in the dress of a valet, with a grey coat, and a small unkempt wig ; a fat, heavy-looking man, pale, without expression in his face or eyes. He was greeted with cheers mingled with cheers for Lauzun, which told him of the treachery of the troops. Louis sought to woo the multitude with soft words, with assurances that he only wanted to go to Montmédy, that he would visit Varennes again, and make it a flourishing city. The people only answered that he must go to Paris or to Verdun, and the window was closed again in despair. When Goguelat returned to the shop, where he spoke no word of his wound, he found the King and Queen completely humbled by this unexpected reverse. The Queen appealed to Madame Sauce, as if she could help them in their difficulties, asking if she had no children, no husband or family ? Madame Sauce said that she should wish to oblige the Queen, 'but you think of the King, and I think of M. Sauce : every woman for her own husband.'

The hours dragged on till five o'clock, and then something happened to cheer the captives a little. Young Bouillé and Raigemont, on their ride to Stenay, had found at Dun Deslon, a gallant soldier, to whom at the eleventh hour Bouillé had confided the secret of the proposed flight. Bouillé and Raigecourt, faithful to their orders, would tell Deslon nothing, but Rohrig, who arrived a little later, was more communicative, and Deslon guessed that the King was in peril and knew that it was his duty to aid him. With sixty soldiers he galloped in two hours the five leagues between Dun and Varennes, which he found well defended. After some parley with de Signemont, he obtained permission to enter alone and to speak to the King without witnesses. He made his way to the house through the crowd; he assured the King that Bouillé would certainly come soon. He had to repeat this three times before Louis seemed to understand him. 'I beg your majesty,' said Deslon, 'to give me your orders for M. de Bouillé.' 'I have no longer any orders to give,' said the King, 'I am a prisoner; tell him that I entreat him to do for me what he can.'

It was not a very kingly answer, but indeed the opportunity for being kingly had gone by. If Deslon had been a man of letters instead of a man of the sword, he might have thought of some stately lines sung by a great French poet two centuries before, lines in which the poet asks what would be said by the generous souls of so many kings now

lying in their dusty sepulchres, Pharamond and Clodion, and Clovis, the Pepins and the Martels, the Charles and the Louis, if they could see what misfortune had fallen upon France. Ronsard could scarcely have foreseen that such a misfortune could have fallen upon France as to have a king who did not dare give orders in a French town. But if Deslon had no orders to take he had suggestions to make, and he showed himself a dogged man whom it was hard to cow. De Signemont, who from his conduct it is hard to think of as other than ignoble, wanted to thrust himself upon the conversation between Deslon and his King. Deslon reminded him of the agreement between them, and de Signemont retired ignobly, not without ignoble protests. Deslon was, as Choiseul had been before him, all for a gallant adventure. He and his faithful followers would cut the King out of Varennes, or take the worst. Really, it was Deslon who should have been king, and not Louis. For Louis would do nothing, nothing except wait. Deslon could do nothing except go away. As he took his leave, he spoke a few words of German to the Queen, he the Alsacian to her the Austrian, and the crowd, pouring in again, resented this, and Deslon went his way in silence.

Deslon had a wild hope that if Lieutenant Boudet, who commanded the Hussars in Varennes, made an attack from inside the town, which he, Deslon, should support from outside the town, all

might yet be well. But his message does not seem to have reached Boudet, and while the moments slipped by two men arrived at Varennes. They were messengers from Paris ; they were, in a sense, the ambassadors of the National Assembly.

CHAPTER LXXX

THE KINGLESS CITY

ABOUT eight in the morning the King's escape was known in Paris, and excited alarm and indignation. Armed crowds flocked to the Tuileries, to the Assembly, and to the Town Hall. Santerre flamed abroad with some hundred pikemen. The royal emblems in the streets were destroyed. Lafayette, on hearing the intelligence, complained indeed of being duped, but took it so very coolly that some inferred that he was not sorry to be relieved from his troublesome office of the King's keeper, and that he had hopes that all might end in doing without a king altogether. As he was going to the palace he met Bailly and Beauharnais, and upon their expressing an opinion that it was necessary to stop the royal family to prevent a civil war, the General said that he would take this responsibility upon himself, and he immediately instructed one of his aides-de-camp and several officers of the National Guards to go from Paris by different routes, bearing notes signed by himself, in which the National Guards and the citizens were requested to prevent the King's escape. As

Lafayette made his way through the crowd to the Town Hall he found the people in a state of extreme irritation, for the rumour ran that the King was going to put himself at the head of the foreign troops, and that his escape had been aided by traitors, with Lafayette and Bailly at their head. His coolness and his presence of mind, however, saved him from any danger that might have existed.

The dispatches of the Venetian Ambassador give a delightfully living picture of the embarrassment of Paris on the morning of June 21. There came, they say, a cry from the palace in the early morning that none of the royal family was to be found. The guards were surprised; the Assembly and the municipality in consternation; the populace furious. The Venetian letter shows how vague the knowledge was in Paris of what had happened. Paris knew that the King was gone, that the royal family had gone, that the people of the Luxembourg had gone. But as to how they had gone or where they had gone the wildest rumours prevailed. These Venetian letters are very touching to read, with their immediate pictures of Paris, with their record of amazing rumour, with their repetition of Gouvion's desperate assertion of his unfailing watchfulness. They pay a tribute to the composure of the Assembly which no doubt the Assembly deserved. It loved to be Roman, and whenever the opportunity to be Roman was afforded it cannot be

denied that it rose to the opportunity, and was to the full as Roman as the circumstances allowed.

It was scarcely surprising that Paris should be alarmed at the flight of its King. Paris did not love Louis much, did not love Marie-Antoinette at all, and if it had been merely a question of quietly doing without them Paris might have been well content to let them go. But it was not a question of quietly doing without them. It was a question of their coming back again at the head of foreign armies, of the restoration by force of arms of the old order, of the destruction of all that had been done and all that had been won since the States-General came together. Such a prospect was well calculated to cause a general panic. An armed restoration of the monarchy meant death to the extreme men, the leaders of the clubs. To the patriotic it meant the terrors and losses of a foreign invasion. To the soldiery, to the peasantry, to the burgesses it meant a return to the old evil conditions from which they believed that they had escaped for ever. Every sense of patriotism, of self-interest, was appealed to in the fear caused by the King's flight.

The Intendant of the Civil List, La Porte, sent to the Assembly an unsealed packet which he had that morning received from one of the King's servants. It was a proclamation to the French people in the handwriting and with the signature of the King. He recapitulated the insults to which he had been subjected, and showed the degraded state to which

the royal power had been reduced. With many grave causes of complaint he mixed up trivial matters. He said that the palace of the Tuileries was not prepared for his reception when he came to occupy it, and that the arrangement of the apartments was not suitable for his convenience. He said that the Assembly had given him twenty-five millions for his civil list, but that the maintenance of the splendour of the crown and the charges with which it had been encumbered since the grant would absorb the whole of it. It was a foolish, unkingly document, but its author was a foolish, unkingly man.

If the King was unkingly, the National Assembly was more austere Roman than ever. Alexander Beauharnais, as president, informed the Assembly that the King and a part of the royal family had been carried off in the night by the enemies of the public interest. Prompt measures were taken. It was decreed that couriers should be despatched to the departments to forbid the royal family to leave the kingdom, and to arrest the persons who were carrying off the King. The people were recommended to be tranquil and to respect the law, and were assured that the Assembly would watch over the public interest. The ministers were sent for, but Montmorin, who was besieged in his hotel by a crowd, required an order of the Assembly to obey the summons. The King, while attempting to save himself, had

exposed his ministers, and particularly Montmorin, to the greatest danger. The Assembly gave the executive power to the ministers, and declared that its decrees should require no other sanction than the signature of the keeper of the seals, who should also put the state seal to them. When Lafayette's aide-de-camp was stopped by the people his authority was renewed by the Assembly, and he was entrusted with the orders of the National Assembly.

Of course the Jacobin Club was not idle. On the evening of the 21st Robespierre was there, deploring the feebleness of the measures taken by the Assembly. He insisted that Louis relied on the traitors whom he had left behind him; that the King admitted in his own handwriting that he had fled; and that, nevertheless, the Assembly by a gross falsehood, the purpose of which was to maintain the King in his power, had declared that the King had been carried off. He accused the Minister of War, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of the Interior of conspiracy. By such charges, he said, he knew the danger that he brought on himself, but the consciousness of his integrity would make him view death almost as a blessing, as it would relieve him from witnessing those misfortunes which he saw to be inevitable. Camille Desmoulins, always hot-headed, always emotional, shouted that all were ready to die with him, and the club responded by acclamation.

Danton made a furious attack on Lafayette, who was present. He urged his hearers to cheat themselves with no illusions. For him the flight of the King was only the outcome of a vast conspiracy. Only understanding with the leading public functionaries could have made it possible. Then Danton turned towards Lafayette, and asked him if he thought that after swearing that he would answer for the person of the King with his head he could liquidate his debt merely by appearing in the Jacobin Club. 'You swore,' thundered Danton, 'that the King should not depart. Either you have betrayed your country, or you are stupid enough to have answered for a person for whom you could not really answer. In the most favourable view you have declared yourself incapable of commanding us.' Lafayette was immediately defended by Alexander Lameth, and a little later he said a few words himself, in which, somewhat to the dissatisfaction of many of his hearers, he ignored Danton's charges and accusations, and merely declared that he had come into the club that day because it was the place where all good citizens should rally. He ended by saying that he had never been so confident of liberty as on that day, after having enjoyed the spectacle of the bearing of the people of the capital. In the end the club issued a sort of address to the affiliated clubs bidding them and every good citizen be of cheer, for all should yet be well, which was at least as

practical and opportune a proceeding as quarrelling with Lafayette.

Not to be behindhand with the Jacobins, the Cordeliers put forth a republican manifesto headed with some lines from Voltaire's 'Brutus' adapted to the occasion, and they sent an address to the Assembly which declared that the King had abdicated; that royalty, and particularly hereditary royalty, was incompatible with liberty; that the Assembly ought to proclaim a republic, or to wait at most till the primary assemblies had expressed their opinion and decided the question. The demand for the republic had found a decided voice.

From the time when the King's flight was known the sittings of the Assembly were permanent, its conduct persistently Roman. It had to protect France, deserted by its King, from the danger of foreign invasion and the violence of revolutionary agitation. Commissioners were appointed to administer a new oath to the army, which was to swear to protect the country against all its enemies within and without, and not to obey any orders except such as were given pursuant to the decrees of the Assembly. The primary assemblies were still to go on with the nomination of electors, but the electors were not to meet until a time should be fixed by the Assembly.

About ten on the evening of the 22nd some deputies hastily entered the hall of the Assembly with the tidings that the King was arrested. The

president read a letter from the municipality of Varennes, which announced that the King was in that place, and asked for instructions. The Assembly named three commissioners—Latour-Maubourg, Pétion, and Barnave—who were invested with authority to secure the return of the King and the royal family to Paris, and they were enjoined to observe all the respect due to their rank. Bouillé was deprived of his command, and an order made for his arrest.

Gouverneur Morris treated the news of the flight with his characteristic causticity and cynicism. He saw that if the royal family got off safe a war was inevitable, and that their recapture would probably suspend for some time all monarchical government in France. But what mainly concerned him in the whole matter was that he thought the confusion would work favourably for the sale of American lands. He saw and talked with everybody, with Lafayette's wife—who seemed to be half wild, no doubt at her husband's peril—with Lafayette himself, with Montmorin, whom he told that it appeared to him to be impossible to preserve both the monarchy and the monarch. After considering the insurmountable difficulties in the appointment either of a regent or a council of regency, Morris records this reflection: 'Of course they must go on with the miserable creature which God has given. His wisdom will doubtless produce good by ways to us inscrutable, and on that we must repose.'

Morris is very frank in his dislike of the 'miserable creature.' In his diary of July 14, 1791, he quotes M. de Trudaine as 'having heard from young Montmorin that the King is by nature cruel and base. An instance of his cruelty, among others, was that he used to spit and roast live cats. In riding with Madame de Flahaut, I tell her that I could not believe such things. She tells me that when young he was guilty of such things; that he is very brutal and nasty, which she attributes chiefly to a bad education. His brutality once led him so far, while dauphin, as to beat his wife, for which he was exiled four days by his grandfather, Louis XV. Until very lately he used always to spit in his hand, as being more convenient. It is no wonder that such a beast should be dethroned.'

It is hard not to sympathise a little when Miss Miles writes to her father that she thinks the King 'acted a cowardly part in sneaking off, after appearing to be so well satisfied with the present Constitution. He has certainly perjured himself, and given his enemies an opportunity of triumphing over him.'

CHAPTER LXXXI

BACK TO PARIS

It was not long after Deslon's departure that the door of the room which contained the royal family opened, and an officer of the National Guard of Paris entered, with all the marks of hurry about him. He could hardly utter some confused words; but he said enough to show that he had come from the Assembly, and that he had a companion who brought a decree. The door again opened, and Romeuf appeared, with tears in his eyes, holding a paper in his hand. The King snatched it from him, read it, and said sadly that there was no longer a king in France. The Queen read the paper. The King took it and read it again, and then placed it on the bed where his two children were lying. The Queen seized the paper and threw it from the bed, declaring that it should not defile her children. There was a murmur among the people who were in the chamber, members of the municipality and inhabitants of Varennes, and Choiseul prudently took up the paper and laid it on the table.

The King might even still have been saved if Bouillé had arrived in time. But Bouillé did not

arrive in time, though he had received so many summonses. He had the best of all reasons ; he could not come. He could not depend on his troops. All the towns around were hostile to him. He was near Stenay when he first heard of the arrest of the King at about half-past four in the morning. With some difficulty he and his son, who had joined him, got in motion the cavalry regiment of Royal Allemand, the only one that they could depend upon. The soldiers were first well paid, and they made their way at full speed to Varennes, through a country newly alive with armed men. On the road Bouillé heard that the King had left Varennes for Paris. Still he pushed on to Varennes ; but the entrance was stopped up. His men forded the stream, and came upon a canal which they were preparing to cross when they were saved the trouble by Bouillé ascertaining, beyond all doubt, that they could not overtake the King, who was an hour in advance of him. The Germans said their horses were too tired to go any further ; and the garrisons of Metz and Verdun were marching upon them. The game was up. Louis was well on his way to Paris. Nothing but flight was left to Bouillé. He, with a few officers, made his way across the frontier. The master of many legions was an exile and a fugitive.

It was a little after eight in the morning, on June 22, when Louis set out from Varennes to return to Paris escorted by relays of National

Guards. The guards could sometimes scarcely make way for the carriage, as the whole population crowded on the road to see and insult the captive King and the royal party. An old gentleman of Champagne, M. de Dampierre, who attempted to approach to pay his respects to the King, was massacred in the King's presence by the infuriated people. Between Epernay and Dormans, about half way to Paris, the three commissioners met the carriages, and read to the King the order of the Assembly. Barnave and Pétion took their seat in the King's carriage, but, though their authority preserved the royal family from personal violence, they could not protect them against insult. A poor village curé, who attempted to speak to the King, was thrown by the crowd at the feet of the horses, and his life was only saved by the earnest appeal of Barnave.

The conduct of Barnave in the carriage was very different from that of Pétion. Barnave had those instincts which the world calls, vaguely, the instincts of a gentleman. He knew how to carry himself in the presence of distress. Requested by the Queen to take some refreshment in the carriage, he respectfully declined. His behaviour pleased the Queen and Madame Elizabeth; he discharged his commission faithfully by treating the royal family with the attention due to their unhappy case. When the carriage stopped at the inns, Barnave had several private interviews with the

Queen. He had already adopted more moderate opinions, and feelings of admiration and pity for the captive Queen were insensibly mingled with his ardour for the cause of liberty. He had listened with a grave courtesy to the soft voice of Madame Elizabeth as she pleaded with a kind of melancholy wisdom and with a most melancholy earnestness the cause of her brother, who was also her King. It is certain that before the flight to Varennes Barnave had begun to believe that the Revolution was slipping into the control of unfitting hands. But the results of the flight to Varennes may have had their share in convincing him that all was not well for France in the future, that it might be better for France in the present if she accepted some legacy from France in the past.

Pétion's behaviour contrasted unpleasantly with that of Barnave. He ate and drank in the carriage in the way that a vulgar man eats and drinks; he threw the bones of the fowl that he was eating through the carriage door past the King's face; when Madame Elizabeth was pouring out wine for him, he would put up his glass to show that he had enough, without saying a word. Gouverneur Morris has written some bitter words, that are not nearly bitter enough, about Pétion's behaviour in the royal carriage on the return from Varennes. Morris may well have heard from this man and that man some account of Pétion's astonishing boorishness. But he could not know then, and the

world could not know now, how despicable Pétion's conduct was without the written evidence of Pétion himself. It was not a peculiarity of the French Revolution to produce blackguards ; but the blackguards it did produce had the peculiarity of desiring to set down their blackguardism in black and white for the benefit of all and several. Nothing even in the loathsome pages of Barras is more loathsome than Pétion's own account of his conduct on that terrible return from Varennes. It is a question whether his statements, sickening in their obvious untruth, would not be more repulsive if by any conceivable possibility they could be accepted as having even a suggestion of truth in them. His bestial belief that Madame Elizabeth had fallen in love with his brutal body and was longing to offer herself to his brutal caresses is too hideous to smile, too hideous to sigh at. Pétion came to a bad end ; but it goes hard to pity him when one recalls those pages that rank among the foulest of any pages ever offered to the public view since speech became writing and writing print.

As the carriages approached Paris the crowd increased, and it was not possible for the horses to go faster than a walk. The royal family entered Paris on June 25, about seven in the evening, under a burning sun and suffocating clouds of dust, raised by the feet of thousands of spectators, who said little, but whose looks spoke hate. To prevent any outbreak, Lafayette stationed troops on the boulevard

from the Barrière de l'Étoile to the Tuileries, and the King was conveyed to his palace through a line of armed men without receiving military honours. The National Guards simply looked on as he passed, with their arms reversed. All the spectators kept their hats on, except one man, the deputy Guilhermy, who deserves to be remembered. When the mob attempted to force him to keep his hat on, he threw it from him into the crowd, choosing to remain uncovered at the risk of his life. A notice appeared in many places that whoever applauded the King should be beaten, whoever insulted him should be hanged. When the carriages had entered the gardens of the Tuileries, the mob attacked the three gardes-du-corps, who were on the seat of the King's carriage, and they would probably have been murdered if the commissioners of the Assembly had not rescued them. The Queen did not leave the carriage to enter the Tuileries till the King, his children, and his sister were quite safe. De Noailles offered her his arm, but she is said to have rejected it with contempt, and to have taken the arm of a member of the Right.

So came to its end one of the most pitiable enterprises in recorded history. The spectacle of a king flying from his kingdom is seldom a heroic spectacle, either in fact or fiction. If Charles Edward had not retreated from England, if the sixteenth Louis had not yielded at Varennes, it is well within the limits of possibility that the house of

Stuart might yet be reigning in England, the house of Capet yet be reigning in France. At least, the Young Pretender was redeemed by a heroism that was denied to Louis XVI. There was nothing heroic about the flight to Varennes except the courage, the patience, and the agony of the Queen, the courage, the patience, and the agony of Madame Elizabeth, and the courage, misplaced and unsuccessful though it was, of certain gentlemen who drew their swords for a dying monarchy and a deplorable monarch. Varennes remains immortal as the scene of the most ludicrous, the most lamentable tragi-comedy in the world.

On the morning of the return to Paris, the Assembly adopted the draft of a decree proposed by the Constitutional Committee that as soon as the King arrived a guard should be appointed which should be under the orders of the Commandant of the National Guard of Paris, and should watch over his safety and be responsible for his person. Similar precautions were taken with respect to the Queen and the Dauphin. All those who accompanied the King were to be put under arrest and interrogated; and the King and Queen were to make a declaration as to the circumstances of the escape. The minister of justice was to put his seal to the decrees of the Assembly, and the sanction of the King was to be dispensed with; the executive power, in the meantime, was to remain in the hands of the ministers. This was a suspension of the royal

power. The King and his family were prisoners in their palace, were subjected to a rigorous watchfulness. Things went on in the Tuileries as before, but Lafayette gave the orders and none came from the King. All the approaches to the palace were closed, and sentinels were placed in every part of it. The Queen could scarcely change her clothes without being seen; and the doors of her chamber and that of the King were kept open, that the sentinels might see whether they were safe in their beds. The King felt his degradation so deeply that for several days he did not speak to his family. The Queen's courage did not fail her, but she suffered all the anguish of a proud spirit insulted and humbled.

CHAPTER LXXXII

BROTHERLY LOVE

WHILE Paris was still seething with the excitement caused by the return of the King, it occurred to certain ingenious members of the Assembly to show the Parisians a splendid spectacle which should confirm, even more than the presence of the captive monarch, the triumph of the Revolution. On May 8, 1791, one of the municipal officers of Paris presented a somewhat remarkable petition to the National Assembly, a petition which showed that the ashes of Voltaire were in danger of being disturbed. Voltaire had died on May 30, 1778, the clerical authorities had refused to allow his remains the privilege of religious burial, and his family, after some conference with the ministry, had been authorised to bury the great man's body in the cemetery of the Abbey of Scellières. When the property of the Church had been declared national property, the Abbey and the Church of Scellières were sold, like other ecclesiastical estates, in conformity with the new laws, and in consequence of this sale the commune of Romilly and the town of Troyes disputed the privilege of sheltering Voltaire's remains. The

husband of Voltaire's niece, Monsieur de Villette, wrote to the Paris municipality to tell them of this dispute, and the municipality brought the matter before the National Assembly, urging it to take action. It pointed out that there was a danger of Voltaire's remains being divided between the commune of Romilly and the town of Troyes; it protested against any such partition, and urged the right of Paris to be the final resting place of the philosopher who was born and who died within its walls. It was suggested that the National Assembly should therefore order the removal of the remains to Paris, and that May 30, the anniversary of Voltaire's death, would be the most fitting day for so august a ceremony.

The proposal created considerable controversy in the Assembly, but the majority welcomed it with enthusiasm, and vied with each other in saluting the memory of Voltaire with passionate panegyrics. There was a minority which endeavoured no less eagerly to assert its dislike of Voltaire and its disdain of these admirers. One deputy recalled and endorsed the opinion of Bayle, that Voltaire had deserved the thoughts, but not the esteem, of the human race. Another insisted that the proper spot for the ashes of the philosopher was the abomination of desolation. Yet another suggested, mockingly, that since his admirers were pleased to compare Voltaire to a prophet, it would be most fitting to send his relics to Palestine. The enthusiasm of the

many dominated the opposition of the few ; the committee appointed to consider the municipal petition reported in favour of the proposal to transfer the remains to Paris, and the National Assembly decided, without discussion and without division, that the body of François Marie Arouet de Voltaire was worthy to receive the honours accorded to great men, and that in consequence his ashes should be transferred from the church of Romilly to that of Sainte-Geneviève in Paris. The solemnity had been duly fixed for July 4, but it was postponed to the 11th of the month. On the 10th a deputation from the municipality waited at the Charenton Gates to receive the carriage which carried the coffin of Voltaire. The carriage arrived in Paris in the evening, escorted by an enthusiastic crowd, and the coffin was placed, amidst the rapture of popular applause, upon the place where the Bastille had been—nay more, upon the exact site of the principal tower of the Bastille, in which, eighty years earlier, Voltaire had been imprisoned. Now a monument built out of stones taken from the Bastille called upon Voltaire in an eloquent inscription to receive in that spot, where despotism had bound him with chains, the salutations of a free country. The next day was devoted to the solemn ceremony of carrying the coffin from the site of the Bastille to the Pantheon, where the body of Mirabeau lay in solitary state.

A magnificent procession had been carefully

planned out. Beautiful young girls, dressed to represent nymphs and muses, were supposed to lend a classical grace to a ceremony intended to rival the stateliest ceremonies of antiquity. Deputations of all classes of citizens were formed to assert by their presence the affection of the city for the memory of Voltaire and her devotion to his teachings. But the misfortune which more than once had attended upon the attempts of revolutionary Paris to recall the ceremonies of Greece and the splendour of Rome attended upon the glorification of Voltaire. The rain poured down with a pitiless persistence from the first moment of the ceremony to the last. Nothing is harder for an assembled humanity than to preserve dignity under a drenching downpour, and when an assembled humanity is specially got up for an occasion with flags and banners, and is adorned by the presence of beautiful young women in the costumes of ancient Greece, the result would be entirely ludicrous if it were not partially pathetic.

Muses and Graces, saturated with mud, are not an exhilarating spectacle, and it may well be imagined that nothing in the course of a life which caused him considerable entertainment would have more entertained Voltaire or more moved his fine irony than the circumstances connected with his apotheosis, and the circumstances that followed it. This effervescence of the enthusiasm of humanity and universal love was followed within a little while, within but

a few days indeed, by a stern proof that the homage to the memory of Voltaire did not necessitate a wise appreciation of his philosophy, and that the assurances of universal love made in the presence of his exalted ashes were curiously ironical.

But, rain or no rain, irony or no irony, the ceremony went on to its dripping end. The design for the car, of antique form, which contained the remains of Voltaire, was furnished by David. The car bore a sarcophagus which contained the coffin, and it was covered with branches of laurel and oak, intertwined with roses, myrtles, and wild flowers. On the car were the inscriptions, 'If man is born free, he ought to govern himself;' and 'If man has tyrants, he ought to dethrone them.' The procession opened with a detachment of cavalry, sappers, drummers, deputations from the colleges, and the patriotic societies, carrying different devices. A deputation from the theatres preceded the gilded statue of Voltaire, which was surrounded by pyramids bearing medallions on which were written the titles of his chief works. The statue, crowned with laurels, was carried by men dressed in classical costume. Members of the learned academies surrounded a gilded chest, which contained the seventy volumes of the works of Voltaire. Bodies of musicians, instrumental and vocal, swelled the procession and preceded the funeral car which carried the sarcophagus. This was surmounted by a couch on which the

philosopher was represented reclined, while Fame placed a crown upon his head. On the sarcophagus were inscriptions which declared that as poet, philosopher, and historian he gave to the human mind a great impulse, and prepared France to be free. Twelve horses drew the car, led by men in classical costume. The car was followed by a deputation from the National Assembly, the department, the municipality, the judges of the different courts, and a battalion of veterans. A body of cavalry closed the procession.

The theatres past which the procession moved were appropriately decorated to honour the man who wrote 'Œdipe' at the age of seventeen and 'Irene' at the age of eighty-three. The procession halted before the house of de Villette, where the heart of Voltaire was deposited; on the front of the house was the inscription: 'His mind is everywhere; his heart is here.' Madame de Villette placed a crown on the statue of Voltaire. Some strophes of an ode by Chénier and Gossec were sung in front of the house, accompanied by instruments, some of antique form. Madame de Villette and the family of Calas joined the procession; and other women dressed in white, with tricolor belts and ribands, preceded the car.

History has seldom offered a more whimsical contrast. There was the King, a fugitive, arrested, brought back, and confined in his own palace. Here was Voltaire, once a captive in the Bastille, called

from his humble grave to pass the ruins of his prison and be led in triumph through the streets of Paris, to rest in the national temple. There was a sterner contrast to follow, the contrast between the principles of universal love so generously proclaimed in that hour of apotheosis and the events which, a few days later, darkened and distracted a city already dark and distracted enough.

On the 26th the Assembly decided that the tribunal of the arrondissement of the Tuileries should proceed to the interrogation of the persons who were arrested, but it appointed three commissioners—Tronchet, d'André, and Duport—to take the declarations of the King and Queen. Robespierre protested vainly against this exception in favour of the King and Queen. He argued that the Queen was a citizen, that the King was at that moment a citizen, accountable to the nation, and in his capacity of first public functionary he ought to be subjected to the law. It appears that the commissioners made such suggestions to the King as would contribute to render his declaration more agreeable to the public, and on the whole it was not ill received. The King stated that the insults which he had sustained on April 18 and the impunity with which he was assailed by libellous attacks were the cause of his attempt to escape. He declared that his intention was not to leave France, and that his journey had not been undertaken in concert with foreign powers or with any Frenchmen

who had left the kingdom. He added that in Paris he could not well know public opinion, but he had learned by his journey how strong it was in favour of the Constitution. The Queen's declaration was very brief. The King wished to leave with her children, and she would not stay behind; she had a positive assurance that the King did not intend to leave the kingdom; and if he had intended, she would have used all her influence to prevent it. She declared that the persons who accompanied her did not know the object of the journey.

In this, as in all things, even those who do not love the Queen may admit that she carried herself with her accustomed courage. It is one of the curious points in a most curious period of history that we do not know what Marie Antoinette was like. Learned historians have wrangled over the question whether she was pretty or plain. In her case, as in the case of Napoleon Bonaparte, no two of all the many surviving portraits are absolutely alike. But we do know that now, since the flight to Varennes, her hair had grown grey. It had, indeed, begun to grizzle beneath its powder in the year before, in 1790; now, under this last catastrophe, it was quite grey. But under the grey hair the eyes were as bright, perhaps as hard, as ever, and the lips as firm with that firmness of courage which neither misfortune nor humiliation could break down.

Bouillé behaved like a gallant gentleman. He

wrote from Luxembourg a fiery, threatening letter to the Assembly. It was received with contemptuous laughter, and the Assembly passed on to the order of the day. But Bouillé had, we may believe, no serious hope that he could intimidate the National Assembly with Paris and the bulk of France behind it. All he wished was to save the King by sacrificing himself. He knew well enough the state of opinion in France, and in a letter shortly after addressed to the emigrant princes he warned them that nearly all France was against the old order; that the exceptions were a few persons who were interested in its restoration; that it was impossible to re-establish the old order except by force; and that if the people were subjected by force, it would be impossible to keep them quiet. Their obedience could only be secured by an order of things which should be agreeable to them individually. Tranquillity could only be established and maintained by a government which should ameliorate the condition of the people and secure for ever the destruction of old abuses. All of which goes to show that Bouillé had a very fair appreciation of the position, and might under better conditions have done better things.

The leaders of the Right, on June 29, drew up a declaration against the decrees by which the Assembly assumed all the power and suspended the King's functions. They declared that they would henceforth take no part in any deliberation

of the Assembly which did not solely concern the interests of the King's person and the royal family. In all some three hundred and fifteen deputies signed this declaration, but about thirty, among whom was Malouet, signed it with this restriction, that they would speak and vote whenever they thought it advisable. Among the signers was the Marquis de Ferrières, and yet he admits the impolicy of the measure, and says that those who drew up the declaration thought more of the damage which they could do to the constitutional party, which they detested, than of the service which they might render to the King and the royal family. The King's flight thus brought the parties more distinctly in opposition. Many of those who signed the declaration were in favour of the old monarchy, and by this act they separated themselves from the moderate constitutional party, who, however, were less afraid of them than of the men who were hot to proclaim a republic.

The name of 'republic' had for some time been made familiar to the French by a few writers. Before the King's flight Camille Desmoulins had said that only the name of monarchy was left to France, and that, setting aside five or six decrees, which contradicted one another, France had been formed into a republic. But republicans such as Brissot had treated of the republic as a theoretical rather than a practical question. Circumstances now made it a practical question. Even those who were in

favour of a constitutional monarchy had served the republican cause by their measures. They had thought more of establishing a free government than of giving stability to it. But republicanism was now in the air ; everyone thought of it, talked of it, argued for or against it. The prospectus of a journal called 'Le Républicain' was posted up at the very doors of the National Assembly. It was signed by one Duchastellet, a colonel of Chasseurs, but is said to have been drawn up by Thomas Paine, the author of the 'Rights of Man,' who was then in Paris, and who, according to Gouverneur Morris, was full of discontent at the way things were going. There was at this time a report that Sieyès had turned republican. Sieyès denied it in a note to the 'Moniteur.' He said that he preferred a monarchy, because it was demonstrable to him that there was more liberty for the citizen in a monarchy than in a republic, and every other reason for determining in favour of one or of the other was puerile. But Sieyès thought of an elective monarchy, and he aimed at securing all the advantages of the hereditary principle without any of its inconveniences, and all the advantages of election without any of its dangers. Paine, in the 'Patriote Français,' gave notice that he accepted the challenge which Sieyès gave to the sincere republicans, and would prove the superiority of the republican system over this nullity of system called monarchy.

While Paine and Sieyès argued, Lafayette, though probably in theory a republican, looked at the matter as one of expediency. The question was whether people's minds were prepared for the republic. There was no middle way between a republic and the monarchy with Louis XVI. If the King was deposed and his son proclaimed in his place, a regent would be required, and there was no person whom public opinion would accept as a regent. In the Assembly it seemed certain that there would be very few votes for a republic. The conclusion of Lafayette and his friends was that they must stand by Louis XVI. and hope for the best. It is doing Lafayette no great wrong to assume that in every crisis which occurred, if his heart was throbbing for his country, his head was thinking for himself. He liked to be king unmaker up to a certain point; it can hardly be doubted that he liked to be Mayor of the Palace. If there were no king, there could be no Mayor of the Palace, and Lafayette knew very well what measure of popularity the *Sieur Motier* had with the Jacobin Club and with the men of the Cordeliers, who hung upon the words of Danton. But with a Do-nothing King, such as Louis was by nature, such as Louis would now wellnigh be by law, the position of a Mayor of the Palace was, if not a pleasant, at least a conspicuous position.

The Jacobins had already decided what the Assembly should do with Louis XVI. Danton

said that the King was either criminal or imbecile ; and it would be a horrible thing, when they had the power to find him criminal or imbecile, not to adopt the latter alternative. He proposed that the departments should assemble ; that each should name an elector ; that the electors should appoint an executive council of ten or twelve, who should be changed, like the legislature, every two years. An address from the club of Marseilles to the French people recommended Robespierre, 'that only rival of the Roman Fabricius,' and Danton to their especial protection. The address assured France that Marseilles had sworn to watch over the precious safety of those rare men whom the capital had the happy advantage of possessing in its bosom, and that Marseilles was ready, on the slightest show of danger, to come to the capital to tear the mask from the hypocrites, and to place truth on the national chair between Robespierre and Danton.

The Jacobin campaign against the King was ably engineered. The people of Paris were told that the departments called for the deposition of the King, and the people in the departments were told that the Parisians called for the deposition of the King. But the great majority in the Assembly were opposed to the policy of the Jacobins, and were anxious to see the King placed in a position of safety to himself and advantage to the country. Thus on July 15, after much debate, the King was, after a fashion, set upon his throne again. But he was

only thus reinstated under severe conditions. It was decreed that if the King should retract, after having sworn to the Constitution, he should be considered to have abdicated. It was decreed that if he put himself at the head of an army to act against the nation, or gave orders to that effect, or if he did not, by some formal act, oppose any attempt of the kind being done in his name, the King should be judged to have abdicated. After this he would become a plain citizen, and be responsible in the usual way for all his acts after his abdication. Thus royalty was saved for a time, and the flight of the King was declared not to be a constitutional crime. Pétion, Robespierre, and Buzot protested against the report of the committee which resulted in this decree. A deputy from Pamiers, hitherto unknown, Vadier, now made himself known by the violence with which he raged against any concession to the King. The voice was the voice of Vadier, but the words were the words of Marat; and Marat, who did not love to see his thunder stolen, declared later that the speech was a tissue of phrases borrowed from the patriotic journals, particularly his own 'L'Ami du Peuple.' Of the speeches in favour of the decree that of Barnave produced the most effect. Barnave had learned and unlearned much since the days when he asked ironically his famous question, 'Le sang qui coule est-il donc si pur?' His speech seems a prophetic warning against the miseries that were to come. He treated directly of

the question that was before the Assembly, but he also treated the mighty question of the Revolution. In the simplicity of his heart he asserted that it was a great evil to perpetuate a revolutionary movement which had destroyed all that it ought to destroy, which had brought its supporters to the point at which they ought to stop—the old dream of all initiators of revolution. Barnave urged that its efforts had made all men equal before the law civil and the law political; had restored to the State all that had been taken from it. From this for Barnave resulted the great truth that if the Revolution made a single step in advance it could not make it without danger. The first step in the direction of more liberty would be the annihilation of royalty; the first step in the direction of more equality would be an attack on property. So Barnave reasoned, honestly believing that he could say to the Revolution, ‘Thus far and no farther.’ For the hour he carried his point. At the same time it was decided that Bouillé, and all others who were concerned in the King’s evasion, should be prosecuted. A little later it was decreed that the royal authority was suspended until the Constitution was presented to the King for his acceptance. The Assembly was bold enough to set at liberty the King’s equerries and the two waiting-women of the Queen. For the moment it seemed as if all unpleasant memories of the flight to Varennes had been amicably blotted out.

But the Jacobins were inclined to no such affable oblivion. In the evening the decrees of the Assembly were received at the Jacobins with a disgust which was only tempered by the utterances of Robespierre. Laclos and Danton urged that the Jacobins should draw up a petition and send it to all the affiliated societies for signature, and that it should be signed by everybody, even women and minors, and then be presented to the Assembly with eight millions of signatures. A committee was appointed to draw up the petition. It was to be signed on the following day in the Field of Mars. On the very day when the Jacobins took this extreme step, which might easily be construed into a menace to the Assembly, there was a surprising secession from its own body. Almost all the deputies who were members of the Jacobins met at the Convent des Feuillants, with the intention of transferring to this new locality the sittings of the club of which they were the founders, and with the declared object of purging the society, and only retaining those members whose principles were in harmony with the purposes which they had always had in view.

Secessions are seldom successful, especially when the seceders aim, as the founders of the Feuillants aimed, at being moderate, at being respectable. Duport and Lameth, Barnave and La Rochefoucauld and Sieyès, Bailly and Lafayette, were now as eager to hold the Revolution back as they had

been eager before to spur the Revolution on. They had helped to set the great machine of the Jacobin Club going, and now, when the machine was going too fast for them, they thought to stay the terror of its revolving wheels by conspicuous withdrawal. They hoped, it is possible that they believed, that if the men of the club of 89, if the leaders of the Revolution, if the nobles and the gentlemen of birth who adorned a revolution with their presence, were to withdraw from the Jacobins, the Jacobins would by that very act of withdrawal wither away and speedily cease to be. But all happened quite otherwise. The enterprise of the Feuillants is one of the most ludicrous as it is one of the most melancholy catastrophes in a story that is often ludicrous, but that is always melancholy. The men who remained in the Convent of the Jacobins saw without despair their men of light and leading desert them and gather together in the Convent of the Feuillants, adding, for the third time, the name of a religious house to the purposes of a political club. The Jacobins simply became more extreme than before, more clamorous for the deposition of the King, more strenuous in their efforts to push and present their great petition.

In the meantime the Assembly as a body had allowed itself to feel considerable resentment at the attitude of the Jacobins and the preparation for the monster petition. It is possible that it was encouraged in its attitude by the secession of the

respectable party from the club. It may have thought that the hour was with the Feuillants and with it. It ignored the laws of political gravity. It forgot, or seemed to forget, its own cut-throat self-denying ordinance. It thought that the moment had come to strike a strong blow in favour of a bourgeois revolution against a prolétaire revolution. It met the threat of the mass meeting on the Field of Mars with a counter-threat. Bailly was communicated with. Lafayette was advised. Bailly was to play the resolute. Lafayette was to play the man. The people were warned—and under the conditions the warning was grotesquely ironic—that all assemblages, with or without arms, were contrary to law, contrary to that famous martial law of which so much had been talked, with which as yet nothing had been done. But the petition went on all the same, and the petitioners, heedless whether the Assembly talked with the speech of men or of angels, were as busy as bees.

The petitioners insisted that the King's attempted escape and his justification of that escape were practically equivalent to a formal abdication. They censured the National Assembly for failing to enforce the abdication which it had already practically recognised when it had laid hands upon the executive power, and had placed the King under arrest. The petition called for and obtained a great number of signatures. As in the old days of the

League, sympathisers hastened to add their names. The petition was promptly printed and placarded all over Paris. Everybody read it, everybody talked of it. Groups formed in the streets to discuss it, and these groups soon began to increase in number, in volume, and in agitation. Proclamations published in the interests of public peace to call for calm only proved by their existence the absence of calm, and so added another danger to the peace they sought to protect. The National Guard broke up a group in one place to see it form again in another. People predicted, feared, hoped, or expected some kind of catastrophe.

In times of revolution the expectation of a catastrophe is more often than not the cause of a catastrophe. Constitutionalism as represented by the National Assembly, respectability as represented by Bailly, saw with alarm the growing agitation of Paris, and attributed it with a convenient vagueness to the presence of foreign agitators in the city. The old panic cry of 'the brigands' was raised again. This time the brigands were the salaried emissaries of foreign courts, employed under different disguises and with specious excuses in fomenting popular movements in Paris, with the purpose, of course, of bringing discredit upon the Revolution and the national cause. Whoever may have helped to promote popular agitation, the petition and the petitioners kept the agitation going. A great ceremony was planned for Sunday, July 17,

a great display of the petition on the altar of the Field of Mars, a great signing by innumerable petitioners, the whole to constitute a magnificent protest against an inert National Assembly.

One of the schemes of the promoters of the business was to make the site of the Bastille the tryst of patriotism, the rallying ground of patriots. These, marching thence to the Place of Federation, should grow in number as they marched, until they had swollen to the magnitude and the menace of potential insurrection—that old, sacred right of insurrection once so dear to Lafayette, and now so very likely to cost him dear. But this portion of the general plan came to nought. Constitutional authority had anticipated the design, and had occupied the place of the Bastille with a strong body of the National Guard, who effectually prevented patriotic petitioners from rallying there.

But if the site of the Bastille was denied to the growing groups, the very denial gave an additional importance to the altar in the Field of Mars. Petitioners, patriots, many no doubt of the merely curious, some perhaps of the salaried brigands, flocked thither to a common centre of excitement, of effervescence, of insurrection. Before the time appointed for the meeting the altar in the Field of Mars was covered with men and women. Two men were found concealed under the steps. One man had a wooden leg, one man had a gimlet. It was forthwith believed that they were conspirators

hired to blow up the altar. The men tried clumsily to explain their presence. They seem to have confessed their business was some such business as that of Peeping Tom of Coventry, that they hoped for a considerable time in security and unobserved to observe the shapely limbs of citizenesses as they ascended the steps to sign their names to the petition. Whatever their purpose may have been, mere lubricity on the one hand or mere treason to the popular cause on the other, they found scant favour and short shrift. They were carried off to the committee of the section Gros-Caillou, and examined, but on their way to the Town Hall they were murdered by the crowd, and their heads were put upon pikes. The murder, such as it was, of a man with a wooden leg and a man with a gimlet, was soon to be bloodily expiated.

About one o'clock there was an immense crowd in the Field of Mars, and a few obscure emissaries of the Jacobins were there. The chief members of the club were absent. The Cordeliers were there, and stirring. The Jacobin emissaries were instructed to say that as a new decree had been made there must be a new petition. The Cordeliers said that as the Jacobins had not drawn up a petition, they would draw one up on the spot. They drew up their petition, and separate leaves were distributed in order to be signed. About six thousand persons signed, including those who merely made their mark. The petition exists, for the leaves were picked up

by the National Guards. The chief names were Santerre's, Chaumette's, written with a flowing hand, Hébert's, Henriot's spider scrawl, and Maillard's. The rest were for the most part names unknown. The tumult was now at its height, and the leaders talked of going in a body to the National Assembly. But the National Assembly had been beforehand with the petitioners. Word was sent to waiting Bailly, word was sent to waiting Lafayette. The news of the double murder had reached them; perhaps they thought the horrors of the July of 1789 were to be reborn.

Whatever they thought, Lafayette and Bailly marched to the Field of Mars at the head of a little army of National Guards. The burgesses that had overthrown the monarchy were now prepared to overawe the people. The municipality proclaimed martial law, the Mayor and part of the municipal officers put themselves in motion, preceded by a detachment of cavalry, three pieces of cannon, and the red flag, and followed by a battalion of the National Guards. On the way the people began to throw stones at the National Guards, and a man was arrested who fired at Lafayette, but the General set him at liberty. When the municipality and its armed show arrived at the Field of Mars they were received with hootings and a shower of stones, and a pistol shot passed Bailly and broke the thigh of a dragoon. Some say there was no formal summons to the people to

disperse. Some say there was no time to summon the rioters in legal form. Others again maintain that Bailly did his formal, legal, municipal duty; that he spoke the three ordained summonses to the mob to disperse, but that he uttered them in a voice so weak, so broken that they were heard by no one, and might to all intents and purposes as well not have been uttered. In any case Lafayette acted as if they had been duly uttered. At first he gave order to fire without ball, but the people, seeing that no damage was done, made a fresh attack. A second discharge with ball killed some of the rioters, and the cavalry dispersed the rest. The number of persons killed is estimated at one hundred by some writers. Saint-Just spoke of two thousand being killed. The official returns make the number eleven or twelve, and the number of wounded about the same.

For the moment it seemed as if the game of the fierce Jacobins, of the almost fiercer Cordeliers, was up. The crowd, naturally enough, fled in all directions from the fatal line of fire, trampling down more victims as it fled than Lafayette's bullets ever killed or scotched. The men of the new order had had recourse to precisely the same methods and arguments that had ever been employed by the men of the old order. And so the crowd fled for their lives. But not the crowd alone.

While the echo of Bailly's drums was still loud in the ears of the Parisians, while the smoke of

Bailly's powder might still be supposed to hover over the Field of Mars, the schemers of insurrection became schemers for their own personal safety. This way and that they ran to cover, astonished with an astonishment that was greater than their despair, at employment, and successful employment, of force against their force ; alarmed, with an alarm that had every apparent justification, for the security of their heads. If authority dared so much, authority might dare more. Those who flew the red flag and fired upon an insurgent mob might dare also to disregard the sanctity of insurgent leaders. So the conspirators sought shelter in all directions from a danger that seemed immediate and seemed great. Danton disappeared ; Marat disappeared ; Desmoulins disappeared. Robespierre was not the most conspicuous of the conspirators ; he was not the most deeply implicated in the conspiracy. But he was never without a sense of his own importance, never without regard for his safety. He feared that he might be arrested if he passed the night in his own lodgings. He passed it elsewhere, and never returned to his own lodgings. The shelter of a night proved to be his shelter for the rest of his life. It is characteristic of the man and of the man's star that the chance and choice of this evening found for him a new set of adorers, who served, and by tradition serve, to perpetuate his cult, and that he was at the same time the cause of catastrophe to a number of people who till then

were ignorant of his nature and innocent of his opinions. Charlotte Robespierre relates that as her brother was making his way home from the Field of Mars on the day called the day of the massacre he was recognised and applauded by the crowd, as he passed the Rue Saint-Honoré near to the church of the Assumption. As he sought to evade this inopportune enthusiasm, a man who came out of a shop offered him shelter for a few hours until the effervescence of the streets had abated. The man was a carpenter named Duplay. Robespierre accepted, as he believed, hospitality for at the most a night, and in doing so accepted the hospitality of a lifetime.

So keen is the curiosity of students of the revolutionary epoch, so living the interest which the memory of Robespierre kindles in the mind of those who hate as well as of those who love him, that the mere accident of his establishment at Duplay's has been the cause of a voluminous, vehement, and whimsical controversy. The controversy—it began in 1895—is as to whether the house of Duplay, the residence of Robespierre, is or is not recognisable, traceable, recoverable in the house which now occupies its site. M. Hamel, Robespierre's biographer and champion, maintains, and has maintained for thirty years, that all trace has vanished of the dwelling-place as it was when Robespierre dwelt within its walls. According to him, alteration and reconstruction had wholly and

irreparably blotted out all traces of the place where Robespierre came to pass a night and stayed to pass so much of a lifetime as it was allotted to him to live. M. Lenotre, however, the author of '*Paris Révolutionnaire*'—a book that is always earnest and always interesting, if not always unimpeachable—asserts that the house is still practically existing, that the alterations have modified without destroying its characteristics, and that the rooms in which Robespierre slept and ate, and worshipped himself and was worshipped by others, are still discernible to the eye of intelligence. The view of Lenotre has been adopted and championed to the utterance by M. Victorien Sardou, the dramatist, who is an ardent investigator of all that concerns the Revolution and a bitter opponent of Robespierre and the Robespierre tradition. This is the place to note, as significant, the existence of the controversy; this is not the place to consider its merits. The interested will find Hamel's views in the volume of the '*Revue de la Révolution*' for the year 1895; they will find Sardou's arguments in his pamphlet '*La Maison de Robespierre*' published a few months later than Hamel's paper, and written in direct reply. There is a return reply by M. Hamel. I may, however, be permitted to say that, after carefully reading the arguments of both sides, my own opinion is that M. Sardou has the best of it. It is easy to say that the matter is of no importance, but it is as absurd as it is easy. So long as human beings

take any interest in the lives and the events of those who have gone before them, so long will they take interest also in the habitations, as in the graves, of those they study. The memory of Robespierre still bulks so large, his influence is still so great, the feelings aroused by his name are still so fervent and so extreme, that nothing in connection with his brief amazing story can be considered too trivial for attention. No man knows where his body lies in death ; it is but natural that men should feel curious as to where his body abode in the days when he still lived and looked upon the earth.

On the following day the Assembly, through the mouth of the ex-Jacobin, Charles Lameth, its president, thanked the magistrate and the National Guards for their conduct in shooting down Jacobins. But if the Assembly had struck a temporary alarm into the leaders of the Jacobins, it did not follow up its victory. The clubs were not closed ; the violence of the Press was scarcely restrained by the arrest of a few royalist or a few Jacobin journalists. A draft of a law governing the Press was proposed, but it was rendered null by the addition of some words proposed by Pétion, which restricted the decree to such writings as should formally urge to disobedience to the laws.

Lafayette, Barnave, Duport, the Lameths, d'André, Chapelier, and other eager exultant Feuillants held their meetings and sang their songs of victory, but they were too much divided in opinion

to agree on any plan of operation. They wanted the vigour and sagacity of Mirabeau to direct them. In the meantime the Jacobins took to themselves the wisdom of the serpent. They passed a resolution in which they declared their attachment to the Constitution and their obedience to the decrees of the Assembly. The next day they sent an address to the Assembly, in which they expressed their sorrow at the views and principles of the club being misunderstood. Pétion published a letter, in which he admitted that some errors had been committed by the club, but that its services were great. He said he was near abandoning the cause in despair, but he had been prevailed upon by some friends to remain at his post.

There was a contest between the two clubs, Jacobins and Feuillants, for the possession of the affiliated societies ; and a circular was sent by each of them to the clubs in the departments. But the Feuillants were engaged in an unequal contest. The greater part of the moderate members had retired from the affiliated societies, and these were now directed by men who did not entertain the opinions of the Feuillants. Three questions presented themselves for the consideration of the affiliated societies—reunion of the two clubs, adhesion to the Feuillants, or a continuance of union with the Jacobins. The circular of the Jacobins received the adhesion of the greater part of the clubs. Many of the deputies returned to the fold.

The supremacy of the Jacobins was firmly established. In the last months of the sittings of the Assembly the association numbered above eighteen hundred members and two hundred and fifty affiliated societies.

Robespierre recovered from his alarm when he saw that the Assembly did not follow up its victory. He felt sure that the Jacobins would triumph. He published an address to the French people in defence of his honour and his country ; for to Robespierre his personality was intimately, essentially associated with his cause. If he was timid in action and alarmed by personal danger, he was bold when he saw his opportunity. In his address he painted himself as a persecuted man, a calumniated man, because he did his duty. His persecutors were a powerful faction, which aspired to rule in the National Assembly. But Robespierre was not the real object of their attack ; it was his principles, it was the cause of the people, which they designed to crush by oppressing the defenders of the people. He declared that if he must see liberty fall beneath the efforts of his enemies, he would, at least, while he perished in its defence, leave to posterity a name without reproach and an example for the imitation of honest men. He said that the principles which he had brought with him to the Assembly, and which he had constantly supported, were those which the National Assembly had solemnly recognised by the Declaration of

Rights as the only legitimate basis of every political constitution and all human society. He maintained that all the decrees of the National Assembly, that all his own opinions, at least, could only be consequences of the two principles to which men might reduce the declaration of the rights of man and of the citizen, Equality of Rights and the Sovereignty of the Nation. It was a logical consequence of these principles that the King was only the delegate of the sovereign nation. The King was not a power, but an individual to whom power was given by the nation. As to the monarch, Robespierre declared that he did not share in the alarm which the title of King has inspired in most free peoples. So long as the nation was put in his place, and full scope allowed to the patriotism to which the Revolution had given birth, Robespierre did not fear royalty, nor even the hereditary character of the royal functions in one family.

This letter of Robespierre's, with its grave republicanism, with its austere readiness to accept the presence of monarchy without the monarchical power, may be looked upon almost as the swan-song of the Revolution that had been dreamed of, that had been called into being, that had been fostered by men like Lafayette, like the Lameths, like all the excellent gentlemen who now formed the Feuillants Club. Roughly speaking—and all history must inevitably, even in an age of documents, be written with the reservation that it is written roughly speak-

ing—the first stage of the French Revolution, that which the men of the time believed to be the French Revolution, came to its end practically with the apparent triumph of Feuillantism over Jacobinism, came to an end actually with the completion of the Constitution, and its acceptance by a King who had no choice but to accept.

One of the most pathetic little books in the world lies before me as I write. It is a small book, even a dumpy book, bound in a dingy, last-century binding, and printed in a detestably small type. It is adorned, in the phrase of the day, with cuts, and it bears the date of 1792 and the imprint of Paris and Strasbourg. It is the '*Précis Historique de la Révolution Française*,' par J. P. Rabaut, and it is one of the most curious and the most melancholy monuments of folly and complacency whereof the world holds witness. For while it is a record, and a fairly accurate, fairly intelligent account, of the events of some three momentous years, written by a man who played his part, an honourable part, in those events, its pathos lies in the fact that it professes to be so much more than merely such a record. When Rabaut de Saint-Etienne finished the manuscript of the queer little volume which is now such melancholy reading he honestly believed that he really and truly was writing the history of an event which was over and done with. He believed in all simple seriousness that the French Revolution came to its peaceful, to its dignified con-

clusion with the promulgation of the Constitution and the dissolution of the Constituent Assembly. To his candid, open, credulous, affably ingenuous mind the Revolution seemed to be nobly rounded off, its troubles and its perils past, the glorious harvest waiting to be garnered, nothing for the high-minded husbandmen to do but to thrust in the sickle and reap.

It is impossible not to read the little book, so infinitely touching in its allusions to the merits of the reigning King, in its amiable conviction that now everything was for the best in the best possible of revolutionised worlds, without wishing the gentle and simple writer had been permitted to go to a yet more untimely grave in the conviction that all was as it should be, and that all was well with France and with the cause. He was destined to taste the cruel irony of things, and his book was destined to remain a symbol of the ironic in the lives of revolutionists. The man who flattered himself so gently that the great crisis was past, that the ship of State, to use his own cherished and not unfamiliar allegory, had ridden through all her perils, and was piloted at last into blue water and the desirable haven, had soon to learn how inexorably rebellious to their instigators revolutions are, and how astoundingly more than rash is it to say of a revolution which is once begun, that here, at such a point, at such a stroke of the clock, date of the year, shadow on the dial, it came prosperously and

peacefully to its close. It was, indeed, but a little while after the publication of that dumpy, dingy volume, with its ineffable contentment, its assured hopefulness, that the harmless, the high-minded author was to die by the guillotine, after having learned with a merciless certainty that all he and those like him had laboured for lay in the dust about the base of a scaffold, and that if the revolution which he believed in, toiled for, and eulogised came to an end in the year 1791, another revolution, perhaps the inevitable successor of its predecessor, but at least far more momentous and more terribly bitter, began its fearful date with that year's business. The phoenix rekindled in its ashes, but it rekindled as a bird of prey.

At the moment when Robespierre wrote his address and Rabaut Saint-Etienne was scheming his history of the completed French Revolution, nobody had any eye for a possible bird of prey. One great fact was obvious. The Constitution was completed. What mattered a convention of Pilnitz, with emperors, kings, and princes protesting against the position of Louis XVI? What mattered feuds of Feuillants and Jacobins? The Constitution was completed. It was true that the Constitution had taken some little time to complete. Through two years of chaos and old night, the Constituent Assembly had laboured at its work. There had been committees to form the Constitution, committees to revise the Constitution. Mirabeau had

wished to be on this latter committee, and had been prevented by the inane astuteness of Lafayette. This committee had for task to extract from the solid rock of the constitutional decrees of the Assembly the pure gold of truth, and to smelt and mould it into the perfect form. With a Barnave and a Malouet trying to make it as monarchical as possible; with a Robespierre and a Biauizat trying to make it as unmonarchical as possible, it did at last take a kind of shape, and leave the King a kind of state, and by retaining that cut-throat, self-denying ordinance foredoomed itself, not to the immortality of which its founders dreamed, but to a very brief and piteous mortality. It was meant to be the eternal table of the law for France, and not for France alone, but, by its illustrious example, for all mankind. But it was after all a Feuillantist constitution, and the Jacobins, too, yearned for their constitution.

Such as it was the Constitution was presented to the King on September 3, and the King, with a whimsical show of independence, agreed to consider it with as little delay as possible. As a reward for this graciousness, the show of restraint was removed. A thousand eyes still proved by their watchfulness that Louis was the most helpless of prisoners, but he was allowed to move in a false atmosphere of freedom, which was, perhaps, more exasperating than absolute servitude. However, Louis played his part with the kind of clumsy

gravity, of stolid inappropriateness, which characterised all his actions. He finally accepted the Constitution and declared that he would cause it to be executed ; but he distinctly said that he did not perceive in the means of execution and administration all the energy that would be necessary to give movement and to preserve unity in all parts of a vast empire.

After the King's letter was read, Lafayette moved and carried a general amnesty and the release of all persons who were confined on account of the King's flight. On September 14 the King pronounced his acceptation of the Constitution in the presence of the Assembly. The King's acceptation was the signal for public rejoicings, but Louis did not and could not rejoice. We are told that, on returning to the palace, he threw himself into a chair and burst into tears. On September 18, the Constitution was solemnly proclaimed in Paris, and in the departments and municipalities. On the 30th, the King in person closed the long session of the National Assembly by an address, to which the president, Thouret, replied. After Louis had retired, in the midst of applause, the president announced that the National Constituent Assembly declared that its mission was fulfilled, and that it now ended its sittings. The labours of the Constituent Assembly were over. After two years and four months, the curtain fell on the first if not the most important or the most instructive act of the great mystery or miracle play of what may be called modern history.

Thus, and perhaps not altogether gloriously, the Constituent Assembly came to its end. It has found the strangest fortune in history. It has received more praise and more blame than any like body of men that has ever been called together, and both the praise and the blame have been intemperate, extravagant, and, in consequence, unreasonable. It must be admitted, even by those who are most exasperated by its faults and by its follies, that the Assembly had noble aims, high aspirations, that it strove towards the goal of a lofty ideal. It came into existence illegally—or at least it legalised its own actions by an authority itself had created—and thereafter devoted itself for the most part to a passionate pursuit of the perfect law. Itself the child of a political convulsion, it was perhaps inevitably pledged to a belief in reform by convulsion, and thus all its legislative acts resemble rather the violent results of volcanic action than the ordered outcome of a steady evolution. The deliriums of August 4 characterise all its impulses and inspire all its actions. To its initiative must be attributed the conviction which did so much to dominate and did so much to harm the Revolution long after the Constituent Assembly had ceased to be, the conviction that to call a thing by a different name had a really great and enduring effect in making it a different thing. The theory according to which something was gained by calling the Count of Mirabeau plain Citizen Riquetti was intimately related

to the theory that a Burgundian ceased to be a Burgundian or a Picard a Picard because his province was carved into a new shape and called by a new name.

The thinking world has waged war over the Constituent Assembly ever since it came to its close, and has wrangled over its workers and its works. The case against the Assembly is to be found at its best in the two immortal masterpieces of Burke, in which the greatest Englishman of his day employed all the strength of his genius, his learning, his irony, and his oratory to annihilate the pretensions, to expose the follies, and to brand the crimes of the National Assembly. It has been the fashion since the days of Burke for advanced thinkers who admire Burke to express their regret for these two utterances of their master. It is certain that Burke was white hot in his hatred of the thing specifically called French Revolution up to the point at which we for the hour take farewell of it. He denounced with all the wealth of his invective, he withered with all the flame of his consuming scorn, the labours which appeared to so many to be scarcely less a blessing to mankind than the Sermon on the Mount. Perhaps the most impressive, because the most prophetic, passage in the much abused, the little read 'Reflections on the French Revolution' comes almost at its close, a passage which, we must remember as we read, was written in 1790. Burke is addressing his friend,

the 'very young gentleman in Paris.' He has, he says, told candidly his sentiments. He does not think they are likely to alter, does not know that they should alter the opinions of the reader to whom they are directly addressed. But he goes on to say that they may hereafter be of some use to him in some future form which the French Commonwealth may take. 'In the present it can hardly remain ; but before its final settlement it may be obliged to pass, as one of our poets says, "through great varieties of untried being," and in all its transmigrations to be purified by fire and blood.'

In the stately indignation of the 'Reflections' as well as in the more angry passion of the 'Letter to a Member of the National Assembly,' written in January, 1791, when Mirabeau was still alive and the monarchy not wholly ruined, those who range against the French Revolution may find their most splendid inspiration. But those who believe in the essential truth of the early French Revolution, and who feel grateful to the men who brought it about and inaugurated a movement tending to good, will find their satisfaction in the grave eloquence and the learned austerity of Lanfrey in those chapters of his '*Essai sur la Révolution Française*' in which he treats of the Constituent Assembly, its hopes and its efforts, its failures and its successes. The passionate eulogy, like the illogical imprecation, can only intoxicate, can never strengthen the half-formed opinion, the growing belief. In his clear,

cold pages Lanfrey expresses, without fury and without despair, the creed of those who, after due consideration, agree to include the Constituent Assembly and its works among the triumphs of progress, among the gains of the human race.

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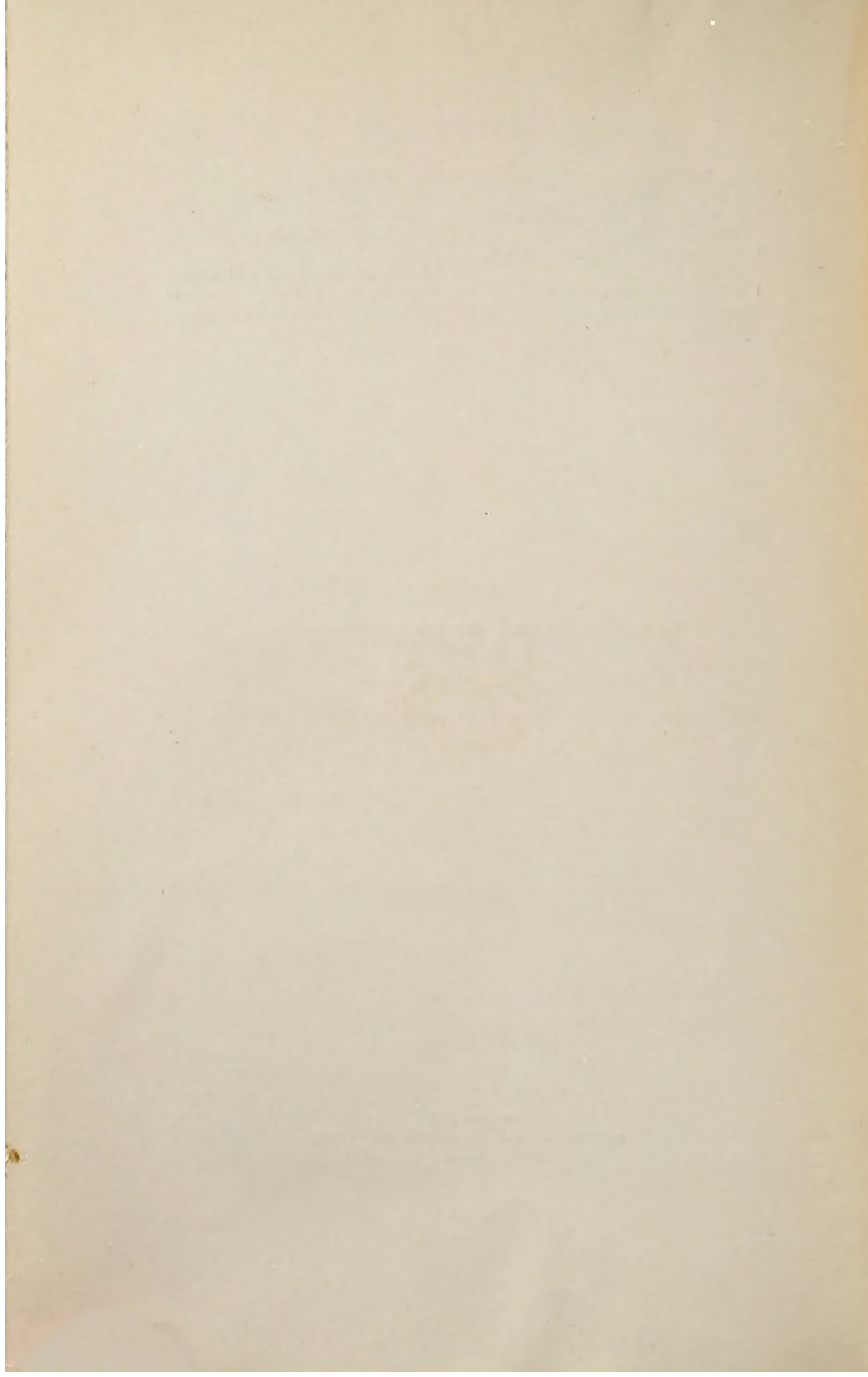
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Erratum

Vol. i. p. 329, line 22, *for* grandson *read* great-grandson





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